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UNORTHODOX LONDON:

OR

PHASES OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE METROPOLIS.

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OR

PHASES OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE METROPOLIS.

BY THE

REV. C. MAURICE DAVIES, D.D.,

FORMERLY FELLOW OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM.

"IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE ARE MANY MANSIONS."

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INTRODUCTION.

WITH one or two exceptions, the following papers have appeared in the columns of the *Daily Telegraph*, from which they are reprinted by permission of the proprietors, and with scarcely any alteration.

The rule laid down was that they should be strictly descriptive articles, expressing no opinion pro or con.

I have to acknowledge the ready courtesy and assistance which I have received from most of the "representative men," whose names occur in the following pages. The only exceptions I have been obliged in self-defence to specify; but they are so few as simply to prove the rule.

I feel that I have learnt much, and softened down a good many prejudices in the course of my two or three years' religious peregrinations; and the hope of producing the same results in stay-at-home travellers induces me to collect the fugitive papers into a volume.

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UNORTHODOX LONDON.

SOUTH-PLACE CHAPEL, FINSBURY.

BEING that not singular anomaly in the Church of England, a clergyman for a time uncharged with clerical duties, I employed my leisure in the examination of forms of belief other than my own. I felt much interest in the study, and, I believe, derived considerable benefit from it. I intend, therefore, under the above heading, to chronicle my wanderings "beyond the Church"—that is, the Church of England "as by law established." That there is much to be gained from such a study is beginning to be tacitly conceded by the Established Church itself, since recent ecclesiastical movements have been little else than a bringing together from opposite extremes of elements hitherto deemed uncongenial and incompatible. The "Mission" or "Revival" of 1869 bore witness to careful explorations over the whole re-

ligious world, from the North Pole of Nonconformity to the most torrid regions of Romanism. That journey I propose systematically to make, and to set down its results for the benefit of stay-at-home travellers. On the plan of working from the circumference to the centre, I set off on a recent Sunday morning, resolved to make my first study at the widest possible radius, the very *Ultima Thule* of religious London. I name it "unorthodox" London, simply on the principle that "orthodoxy is one's own doxy, and heterodoxy everybody else's doxy." I state clearly at the outset that the task I set before myself is to describe, not to criticise or sit in judgment. If it be necessary at all to touch on my own religious convictions, it will be enough to say, that I believe all those systems and forms of belief, whose outward manifestations in worship which I note, contain a greater or lesser measure of truth,—are gradual approximations to truth; and I can only picture them as they presented themselves to my mind, where I endeavoured to give them all "a clear stage and no favour."

My religious wanderings commenced, then, probably as near the reputed North Pole as possible—namely, at South Place Chapel, Finsbury. Mr. Moncure D. Conway delivers a lecture here on Sunday mornings at 11.15; and I select from my MS.

notes one on "The Church built by Voltaire," as containing something like a summary of the doctrines set forth here. In a published sermon, "Our Cause and its Claims upon us," Mr. Conway thus describes the religious body in which he ministers as "almost the only—certainly the chief—free Theistic Society in London." The chapel itself is that formerly occupied by W. J. Fox, and is close to the Moorgate Street Station of the Metropolitan Railway. The subjects of Mr. Conway's lectures are regularly advertised in the daily papers of Saturday. He is generally felicitous in his titles. For instance, the subject chosen for a discourse about the time of the opening of the Œcumenical Council at Rome was "Madonnas of Every-day Life." In this he spoke of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception as "an insult to maternity," and the worship of the Madonna as the logical sequence of the Protestant doctrine of the Incarnation, being, moreover, simply the deification of the female principle in Nature. His Christmas sermon, again, "Christ and Herod to-day," was a comparison between the birth of Christ—the account of which was treated as legendary—and the conception of truth in the human soul from the operation of the Divine Spirit on the heart. Herod represented the world, ever ready to crush the "Christ-principle."

On the occasion of my visiting South Place Chapel, I found myself one of a very small but evidently earnest and intelligent congregation, with a larger proportion of females and poor than I had expected. The chapel is, of course, plain in the extreme, and contains none of the paraphernalia of worship except a pulpit, from which all the service—if one may so term what precedes the discourse—is delivered. Of service, however, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, there is scarcely any. Mr. Conway, who is a bearded and by no means clerical-looking gentleman, mounts the rostrum in the garb of every-day life, and commences proceedings by giving out a hymn from Fox's Collection, which is effectively rendered by a good-trained choir. There is no pretence of congregational singing. This is done for the worshippers by the choir; and from my point of view, of course, such an arrangement seems to give to the worship a degree of coldness, and to destroy the social element which so largely enters into our conception of public devotion; though at the same time, I am aware, from painful experience, that in our own churches, where the theory is different, the result often comes to be the same—that is, the choir does all the singing. Three "lessons" follow—one from the Old Testament, one from the New, and one from some religious work of

more modern date. On the three occasions when I have been present, this last reading has been selected respectively from the works of Theodore Parker, from Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and from the "Ancient Chaldee Oracles." A second hymn is followed by a brief extempore address. Then comes an anthem; and during its performance, the congregation avoid the wearisome ordeal one has to undergo in a cathedral by sitting instead of standing. There is nothing out of place in this; for, as I said, there is no congregational element either in hymn or anthem. The evident intention is to foster a devotional spirit in those present by bringing them to listen to sacred music.

Another very striking peculiarity is, that there is no approach to anything like prayer. The whole service consists of preaching and singing. The sermon is read from manuscript, in a slightly American accent, with very little gesticulation, and only just sufficient emphasis to prevent it from being monotonous. Its matter is practical and scholarly, the language often warming into genuine eloquence, and deepening into pathos.

On the subject of Voltaire, Mr. Conway began by giving an account of his own visit to the philosopher's house at Ferney, near Geneva—"that old battle-field

of religious thought, where Calvin sought to make himself a Protestant Pope, and burnt Servetus for questioning the Trinity; where Arminius was educated in the Calvinism he did so much to destroy; and where Voltaire concentrated the spirit of Scepticism." As he walked in the grounds, amongst the crowd of visitors were two young "Divinity students," who were ready with their antidotes against Voltaire's teaching, and repeated the current story of his awful death. "The priests did all they could to make it awful," said a Frenchman among the group, "but it was really a noble death. When asked to recant, he turned his face to the wall, and said, 'Let me die in peace.' He appealed from the priests to God." "But," said the student, "did not Voltaire do much to destroy men's faith?" "Not so much as Jesus or Paul," replied the Frenchman. "Then, again, he put nothing in the place of the faith he destroyed." The Frenchman pointed to the little church built by Voltaire in his grounds at Ferney, with the motto over the porch, "Deo erexit Voltaire." That was the text of Mr. Conway's discourse. "That church," he said, "is the symbol of Protestantism in the world. The man who weeds and ploughs does as much for the future harvest as the man who sows the corn. Voltaire saved us from the Pope.

Through his agency the Reformation took root in the intelligent classes. He set Protestant divines on the path to worship a God who could be served without degradation. He was, in fact, a sceptic, when scepticism alone could sift the wheat from the chaff." "The Divinity student shuddered at the word 'sceptic.' But why shudder? No nobler word was ever uttered in any language. The Greek verb which gives it to us, σκεπτειν, means to consider, more literally, perhaps, to shade the eye in order to see more clearly. It thus means to look intently, so as to protect the vision from the garish light of prejudice. Priestcraft has contaminated many other noble words, such as 'freethinker' and 'heresy.' But on these sceptics and freethinkers the whole right of private judgment rests. There is no middle course between Scepticism and Rome." Mr. Conway went on to argue that, as Professor Huxley defined scepticism to be the duty—nay, the religion—of science; as in worldly matters we reached our conclusions by suspension of judgment, so, in the highest interests of all, we dare not discard the judicial method, to walk by blind tradition and prejudice. "We live," he said, "in a time of unparalleled religious agitation, and the sudden influx of light must bring some discomfort to eyes long bandaged." He compared this to the liberation of

the debtors from Whitecross Street; some of whom wished to stay longer in their prison, and one who had been, to our disgrace, incarcerated for twenty-seven years stared vacantly about him in the streets when set free. "Such," he said, "is the case in religious revivals. Men seek to go back to the old Whitecross Street walls. The cases of Dr. Manning and J. H. Newman are typical; and this was the feeling against which Voltaire fought like a martyr. He would not do homage to the Man of Nazareth in life; but," he added, in an eloquent peroration, "doubtless, when his last breath was drawn, that crucified One would be the first to welcome him, and to say—'Thou too hadst thy Pilate and thy cross!'"

The great practical deduction dwelt upon was, that there is a *destructive* as well as *constructive* work in religious reform—"a time to build and a time to pull down; just as in the Hindu faith the gods of Production and Destruction were equally energies of Brahma. The Establisher and the Iconoclast work for the same end. Jesus built no Temple; He destroyed Pharisaism. Luther put no Church in the place of Rome. The destroyer is never popular, but he is none the less noble. He works by faith, just as the eye of the sower foresees the full harvest. So was Voltaire's

work "in the deep furrow." Thus did he build that little church, whilst cathedrals crumbled round him. He knew man's deep need of religion: that church bore witness to it. *Deo erexit Voltaire!*

Such is an exceedingly crude outline of a sermon which, I fancy, the worshippers at South Place would be content to take as an epitome of their tenets. No mere analysis, however, can convey a fair idea of these discourses; which, whatever else they may be, are full of thought. Of the religious principles of this strange outlying body, the same authority says, in a published sermon: "Hair-splitting theology, historical criticism, metaphysics concerning Christ—surely, as long as Unitarians can only give these to human souls, they may as well leave them where they are. But there is, I trust, another, a liberated Unitarianism—or rather the son and heir of it, weaned from its timid mother—which feels the whole earth to be man's altar, the broad universe his temple, humanity his Bible, conscience his priest, reason his prophet. To that great faith we who sit here may not have attained; but I fain hope that to its magnificent summit we are heartily aspiring." So, too, with regard to the numerical strength of the body. "Two hundred people, already convinced, spend here one hour and a half every week; for

the rest of the time this property does nothing at all."

Since writing the above, a year or two ago, I learn that the average attendance at South Place is now from 300 to 350. The interior has been entirely repaired, cushioned benches having replaced the old pews, and a platform with modern desk the pulpit.

Having sojourned so long at the North Pole, I made one step southwards, in the shape of a visit to the Society of Independent Religious Reformers in Newman Street, where Dr. Perfitt officiates. My mind misgave me that I should be somewhat out of order in visiting this religious body *after* South Place; but I find they are really a step in advance in the admission of prayer into their service. Dr. Perfitt shows considerable grasp of his subjects—the one I heard him treat was "The Right Use of Reason in Religious Debates"—but his style is somewhat vituperative. The whole tone of the proceedings in Newman Street differs from South Place, where, if he can only tolerate hearing some of his favourite dogmas torn to shreds, a visitor can scarcely fail to be interested in the religious phenomenon presented to him.

So far our subject has scarcely taken us among

definite religious communities. These are simply groups of disciples gathering round individual teachers. After lingering awhile here, and witnessing other phases of this community, our next excursion will take us into the sphere of recognised ecclesiastical bodies, equally removed from those of whom we have now spoken, and from the regions dignified with the dubious title of Orthodoxy.

MR. CONWAY ON MAZZINI.

WHILST among orthodox churchmen a certain amount of prejudice exists against the introduction of social or political subjects in the pulpit, that prejudice gradually dies away as we descend through the strata of Nonconformity, and finally disappears altogether when we reach the abysmal region of pure Theism. Naturally enough, when dogmas are quite outgrown, and anything like spiritual direction is a thing undreamed of, the Sunday sermon—even if it still retains that appellation—must take a wider scope than ordinary, and embrace in its regards that which it is now the fashion to call the "religion of humanity;" but which, in common language, would be described as social and political questions of the day. At South Place Chapel, Finsbury, still traditionally

known as "Fox's Chapel," this is pre-eminently the case. A glance at the Saturday programmes in the papers will show that Mr. Conway always keeps his congregation well posted up in current questions. He does not even give his discourse the quasi-ecclesiastical title of a sermon. He calls it a "discourse," and the fact of Mazzini's death having occurred during the previous week, coupled with the orator's known proclivities, rendered it natural that he should announce "Joseph Mazzini" as his subject. The circumstance had the effect of drawing to South Place a larger congregation than usual; for, in general, Mr. Conway's assemblage is rather select than numerous. The chapel was by no means full, but the congregation was increased by at least a third, and it was easy to distinguish between the strangers and regular attendants, since some of the *habitués* have a custom of walking into their very pews with their hats on, and talking quite loudly whilst sitting there, as though to enter a standing protest against any notion of consecration attaching to their "chapel."

The "service," as has been said, which precedes Mr. Conway's oration, is simple in the extreme. Indeed, it is difficult to see in what sort of religious worship the pure Theist can, from the nature of his persuasion, engage. Singing forms a large ingredient

in the service at South Place, and the vocal performances of the choir are above par. The hymn-book in use is a tremendously eclectic one, ranging from the most secular poets up to Keble, Wesley, George Herbert, and John Henry Newman. After the opening hymn had been sung, Mr. Conway read, in an equally catholic or eclectic spirit, first of all the forty-fourth chapter of the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, then an excerpt from one of Mazzini's Orations, and, thirdly, a poem, by Allingham, called 'The Touchstone.' These readings correspond to what we should call the Proper Lessons in a church. Then followed an exceedingly brief "Meditation," which here takes the place of prayer, none the less eloquent for its brevity, and after this was sung the anthem, 'Happy and Blest,' about which it is enough to say that it was slightly beyond the powers of the choir. Thereupon followed the discourse, which was also brief in point of matter, though prolonged by Mr. Conway's singularly slow and measured delivery. As an evidence how eagerly the speaker was followed, it was quite curious to notice, in contrast with the profound silence that reigned whilst he spoke, the *entr'acte* of coughs, sniffs, and other incidental fidgets, in which his auditory engaged when he came to a temporary stop, so much so, that unwary listeners,

were tempted to rise, thinking the proceedings were over.

Mr. Conway felt that no apology was needed for replacing the allotted subject of the day with this notice of one who lay dead beside Pisa's leaning tower, and whom he graphically described as himself "a tower that did not lean." Mazzini, he said, had a special claim to be honoured in that building, for he, like those who gathered there, believed in the One Supreme Father of Mankind, in the inviolable order of nature, in an ideal humanity, whose witness and martyr he beheld in the crucified Peasant of Nazareth. It had been his own privilege, he said, to meet Mazzini often, and he never did so without reflecting, "This is the most religious man I ever knew." His life was duty organized. His simple creed was "God and the people," which he could not transfer from his heart to a dead symbol. This Mr. Conway claimed as the aim of the society gathered in South Place Chapel, to uphold and aspire to that ideal of a creed expressed in character, a faith written in fidelity, of which Mazzini's life was, he said, the type, and *is* the monument!

This, the speaker said, he was aware, was not the general theory of the man. There was, he observed, a "police" theory of Mazzini, which was more uni-

versal. With regard to the charge that Mazzini was an assassin, he would as soon stop to prove that a lily is not nightshade. The King of Italy, who made this charge, had lived to hear his own Assembly pay a tribute to the friend of the people. The oppressor of France had read in the organs of the party which chiefly supported him in England, honourable estimates of the man he most dreaded. Mazzini was a conspirator. Yes. Night and day he and his brave comrades conspired how they might foil the foes of their country. He was called a revolutionist, too; and so he was, but in the same sense.

Mr. Conway then passed in rapid review the early biography of Mazzini, picturing him as being cast, a mere boy, into prison by the Governor of Genoa, because, as that functionary told Mazzini's father, "he was a young man of talent, very fond of solitary walks by night, and habitually silent as to the subject of his meditations;" and the Government, it was added, "is not fond of young men of talent, the subject of whose musings is unknown to it." It was much that he was obliged to lay aside hopes of forensic and literary success, but still more that he had to see those young men who shared his hopes of a free and united Italy mount the scaffold. Mr. Conway read a very long extract from a letter of

Mazzini, showing the effect this failure of his hopes had upon him, and comparing him with Christ and St. Paul.

Mazzini's aim, however, lay out beyond Italy and embraced humanity. In attestation of this fact, Mr. Conway read another letter addressed to himself by Mazzini in 1865, concerning the duty of America after she had conquered and expelled the internal foe of slavery. This made many persons think Mazzini restless and revolutionary, because he did not rest when his original aim, the union of Italy, had been attained; but it was hardly possible, he said, for one who so recognized the duties of nations to join in a thoughtless enthusiasm because Rome had exchanged a weak Pope for a degraded monarch. With a brilliant peroration, Mr. Conway concluded a discourse which, whatever may be individual opinion as to its subject, can scarcely appear in any other light than a noble and outspoken tribute to one whom the speaker deemed worthy his homage:—"So lived, so moved in the eyes of Europe, that apparition of nobleness, Joseph Mazzini; thus death found him, with eyes and hands still stretched forward, with feet still pursuing that aim which had called him in his boyhood, and which he knew to be the divinely assigned task of his life. He is gone, and the world is so

much the poorer. But the young men of Italy will plant on his grave the cypress which he gave them for an emblem—emblem of mourning, but of faith that is evergreen. They will write there his and their motto, 'Ora e sempre,' 'Now and for ever,' they will remember these, his words,—'Martyrdom is never barren, . . because each man reads on the brow of the martyr a line of his own duty.'"

After the discourse a quaint "hymn," adapted from Chaucer, was sung, commencing with the following verse :—

"Britain's first poet,
Famous old Chaucer,
Swanlike in dying,
Sang his last song,
When at his heartstrings
Death's hand was strong.

"Fly from the crowd,
Dwell with soothfastness," etc.

The whole service concluded with a very brief benediction, which, like some portions of the discourse, was delivered in so low a voice as to be almost inaudible. This was, in fact, the great drawback in the whole affair. More fire was wanting to make the discourse worthy of its subject-matter. The majority of the audience kept every nerve on the stretch to

catch what was being said, but, even so, some of the sentences were quite inaudible towards their close. Certain young ladies and gentlemen gave it up as a bad job, and talked pertinaciously, no doubt on pleasanter subjects than even dead patriots. As soon as the last words of the benediction were over, the congregation resolved itself unromantically into a meeting, and a gentleman stood up on a pew seat, and discussed how best to change the chapel pulpit into a platform.

COLONEL WENTWORTH HIGGINSON ON BUDDHA.

SOME years ago a literary journal asked, in a sort of sentimental and despairing way, how it was that the clergy of the Church of England were so "fatally uninteresting," and why, with a message so incomparably grand to deliver, they faltered so in its delivery. I forget what was the special panacea proposed for the clergy to become more interesting. The journal, I may premise, was not the special one which holds it impossible for a cleric under any circumstances to be other than fatuous; but the form in which the question was asked goes really halfway towards an answer. It is just because the clergy have that weighty message to deliver—"because," in the words of a popular composition, "they have nothing

else to do"—that they get into a certain groove, and therefore not unfrequently fail to claim or share sympathy with those outside that groove. To what an extent this is considered an evil will depend in a measure on the theological bias of those who judge. On the high sacerdotal principle the message is everything, and the man nothing. Up to a recent time very "High" Churchmen thought bad preaching rather a qualification than otherwise for "a priest." They have of late learned wisdom from other quarters in this respect. In lower strata personal influence went for everything, and the very phrase "going to church" degenerated into "sitting under" Mr. So-and-So. The happy mean is, of course, that theory which, recognizing the incomparable grandeur of the message, leaves endless room for personal qualifications in its delivery. Even a herald, simply announcing a proclamation, may mar it by speaking indistinctly, just as the porters at railway stations by fatal familiarity make the name of the place they call out utterly undistinguishable. If personal qualifications are to tell, as they simply *must* tell, there is no doubt that the Church of England is acting wisely in accepting lay agency in her ministrations, and admitting what is equivocally termed "strange preachers" to her pulpit, as a safeguard against getting men of a single

idea only. Those sects who are less rigid in point of ordination than the Established Church, and most of the recognized Protestant bodies, have, in this respect, an unquestioned advantage. Thus it was that Mr. Conway, of South-Place Chapel, having first of all attracted me to the scene of his ministrations by announcing a discourse from himself on "John Sterling and Frederick Maurice," was able to hold out a stronger inducement still when he wrote to say that the most brilliant American essayist next to Emerson would take his place, and lecture on "Buddha." Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, he added, is a descendant of an old pilgrim family, known in this country as author of the entertaining novel 'Malbone, an Oldport Romance;' but much more valued in America for his brilliant 'Outdoor Papers' and 'Atlantic Essays.' He left the Radical pulpit some years ago for the struggle with slavery in Kansas, eventually exchanging the pen for the sword, and distinguishing himself in the late war as the organizer and commander of the First Negro Regiment, the adventures of which he afterwards embodied in a wonderful book, entitled 'Army Life with a Black Regiment.' Clearly I should not in this case listen to a man of a single idea, or of restricted experiences at all events.

Previous to Colonel Higginson's address, and in presence, I am bound to say, of a very small congregation, Mr. Conway performed the simple "service" of this chapel by reading the Beatitudes from St. Matthew, and then, as if by way of commentary, an extract on 'Excellences,' from the writings of Buddha, which indeed harmonized curiously with the passage from the Christian Sermon on the Mount. Three hymns were sung, a very brief extempore meditation offered, and the "service" was over. Mr. Conway announced that he had taken advantage of an old comrade passing through town, to ask him to deliver an address, and that consequently, his own discourse on "Sterling and Maurice" would be deferred until next Sunday. He then subsided into the congregation, and Colonel Higginson took his place in the pulpit. He was a fine military-looking person, not at all like a man of one idea, and in a clear crisp voice said he had come to lecture at the request of a friend, and in honour of the old traditions of Fox's Chapel. He would have liked to speak to them *vivâ voce*, man to man, but the demands of London life were too strong on him to allow that, and he therefore read an essay prepared for a similar congregation in another place. It had often been questioned, he said, which type of reform was the higher—for the reformer to

step up or to step down; for the Carpenter's Son to enthrone himself in the heart of humanity, or for the King's Son to forego his throne and make kings wish to be beggars like him. These two types were embodied in the founders of the two greatest religions in the world—Christianity and Buddhism. The rock-cut records of King Asoka, dating over 200 years B.C., were among the oldest reliable Buddhistic writings. MSS. may vary; but stone is stone. From these we learn what thoughts seemed greatest to this Buddhist King—the Constantine of the new religion. These principles were very simple, and he would make his subject the character of the founder whose faith was so enshrined. Buddhistic books were so numerous as to be worse than a theological library. Buddhistic dates were uncertain even before the era of Asoka. The death of Buddha was generally assigned to B.C. 477; and as he was eighty years of age, this would give B.C. 557 for his birth; but it was possible it dated some years farther back. His family names were Gautama or Sakya-Mouni, and Buddha meant the Illuminator. He was fabled to be without father, but was really the son of a King, and, as such, consecrated to be Prince Royal. He was married, surrounded by every luxury, and kept as far as possible from all sight of pain or suffering. One day, however,

when he was being driven to the Royal Gardens, he saw, for the first time, an aged man, and being told by his servants that all, if they lived, would grow to be like that, he said that birth was, indeed, an evil if it were destined to end in old age. On another occasion he went back thoughtful, having seen a sick person. The King, to banish such ideas, multiplied his son's pleasures, and doubled the guards around him. But, said the speaker, something entered the palace which no guards could keep out. He saw, at last, death. Neither did they keep out monks; and when Buddha saw one, and heard that it was a man who devoted himself to religion, he determined that he would be a monk. He dressed himself in his royal robes, and took a farewell look at his old life; but, just as he was about to leave it, the birth of his little son was announced. This was a new tie; but he broke through it, and withdrew from the palace to become a recluse. Before finally leaving his home, he went into his wife's room, where she was sleeping with her arm around the child, and he dared not move it so as to see the infant, for fear of waking her. So he left the city and put on the dress of a beggar, carrying with him only those signs of a mendicant—the hatchet to chop his wood, the needle to mend his garments, and the filter to strain the water he drank, lest he

should destroy animal life. Then, after some years of asceticism, he elaborated his four great principles, which have been called "The Wheel of the Law." 1. He realized the fact of pain. 2. He went into the source of pain, which he found to be unregulated desires. 3. The destruction of pain by control. 4. The means of so destroying it by the practice of virtue.

Buddha's experience was symbolized by the attacks of evil spirits upon him in a lonely forest. After that ordeal, we find his heart became firm and pure—full of meekness and compassion. He hesitated awhile as to preaching truths which he felt few would understand; but he made a solemn vow to Brahma that he would do so. He began; and found that his work was not only religious but social. Caste stood in his way. In the lowest class were those who exercised the callings of executioners and gravediggers. By no process of transmigration could they be reborn. Buddha stepped down from the palace to associate with these. He took the yellow robe of these poor beggars. If he was wrong, the mistake would not simply attach to this life; but at the next transmigration he would become the meanest insect. So much did it cost to ignore caste in Hindostan. A disciple of Buddha asked a draught

of water from a woman of the lowest caste, and she (like the woman of Samaria) protested. The disciple said, "I did not ask thy caste; I asked for a draught of water." Buddha and his followers said nothing against caste, but they defied it in practice. He went to Benares the sacred city, and preached to the poor in the fields. He showed favours even to fallen women in their degradation. Afterwards he returned to his palace, and found that his wife had taken the same course as himself. Then other female members of his family followed; and finally five hundred women came to the monastery and made him receive them as fellow-workers. This institution of Buddhism has lasted over two thousand years; and even a Roman Catholic bishop has said that Buddhism equalized women with men; Buddhist women occupy a higher position than any in the East.

The great characteristic of Buddha's preaching may be summarized in this one maxim: "If a man does me wrong, and I respond with love, the fragrance redounds to me; the harm returns to him." This, which is extracted from a manual of ethics used in schools, brings us, perhaps, nearer than anything else to the principle of Buddhistic teaching. Buddha began preaching at thirty-five years of age, and preached for forty-five years, dying at the age of

eighty. During all this time he "went about doing good" and advocating the theory of the four laws. He talked to farmers in language they could understand, drawing illustrations from their crops, etc. Then he turned aside into a king's house. Next he spoke to some poor Mary Magdalene. He was persecuted all along by the Brahmin priests "with whose business he interfered."

Sakya-Mouni, or Gautama, died at last in the arms of his disciples. The Roman Catholic bishop says no moralist could have done better. He summarized, in fact, all the noblest principles of human action. He broke down caste; he raised woman from her low estate. No form of religion has done so much for Asiatics as Buddhism. An educated American lady who had been a governess in Siam, said the strongest religious impression ever made upon her was when she stood by the deathbed of a Buddhist priest. We miss indeed in the system of Buddha the poetry of the Vedas. It is like coming down from the grandeur of the Himalayas to the pastoral plains of Thibet. But, as Tennyson has said, "Love is of the valley." Buddha falls short, it may be, of the highest examples. The Roman Catholic bishop naturally contrasts him with Christ. St. Hilaire says that Buddha was a perfect model of all the virtues.

Every prophet has his one distinguishing trait; and that of Buddha was renunciation; that of Jesus was love. It may be said that Jesus preached love with renunciation, Budda renunciation with love. When humanity, he continued, makes up its account of these two great religious teachers, it will be seen that each admitted too much of the idea of renunciation, and omitted the Greek element of beauty. Buddhism and Messiahship caused this limitation. These ideas were not the mere reveries of later disciples; they came too much into the original teaching; and great maxims were looked upon as incidental to this, which was the mere framework of a temporary drama. Long since the curtain has fallen on the drama. Even the Jews are ceasing to expect a Messiah in visible form. Both of these great teachers ignored home, and taught an ascetic not a home virtue. Hence a certain amount of sombreness in their systems. They began from human pain, not from human joy. It is a relief to turn from these to Socrates. Our race has got beyond the stage where any single religious experience will suffice. We need all—need India, Judæa, Greece, and Rome. We want all types, all teachers. Buddhism is only one.

His birthday is still kept significantly. There are

white-robed guests and a gorgeous banquet, and each guest goes out and brings in a poor beggarwoman, takes off her squalid clothing, and puts on her the white banqueting robe. Such is the Buddhistic Christmas Day. Asoka tried long to find the body of Buddha. At last he succeeded. The tomb-door opened at a touch, and the lamps which had been lighted two hundred and eighteen years before were still lighted and full of oil. The flowers were fresh and beautiful as those in the gardens, and the perfume more exquisite than that of new ones. "More than two thousand years have now passed," concluded Colonel Higginson, "and we are opening this tomb again. The lights still burn; the flowers are still fresh; the perfume of the noble life yet remains immortal."

UNITARIANISM.

MR. MARTINEAU IN LITTLE PORTLAND STREET.

THOSE who live amid the higher strata of religious thought and associations will fail to realize the great gulf that lies between the subject of our last paper and the one now entered upon. To the orthodox, the limits of Theism and Unitarianism are vague and undefined. They allow themselves to class both these bodies under the elastic category of "infidels"—a category, let us not forget, which has been found comprehensive enough to embrace more than one prelate now on the Bench. Such persons will be surprised to learn that the Unitarian considers the Theist quite as far removed from orthodoxy as the ordinary Protestant does the Unitarian. He does not express his opinion quite so dogmatically, perhaps; but really there is as much difference between the

Theist and the Unitarian as between the Unitarian and orthodox Protestant, or, again, as between the Protestant and the Roman Catholic. Each, from his own more advanced position, regards those behind him as unorthodox, though only the most advanced apply to them the name of heretical.

That we have advanced *per saltum* will be quite evident from certain unmistakable landmarks. Taking Mr. James Martineau's chapel, in Little Portland Street, as the focus of Unitarianism proper, we find that the adjunct "Reverend" is now prefixed to the minister's name; that he wears the Geneva gown and bands when officiating; and that he not only uses prayer, but a set form of prayer—a liturgy in the strictest sense of the word. There are, it is true, considerable varieties of practice in this respect prevalent among the Unitarians. Some have no set form of prayer; many do not wear the gown; some, again, extemporize; whilst others, like Mr. Martineau, use a MS. sermon. Mr. Martineau, however, is so eminently the "representative man" of his school, that it is absolutely essential to treat at length the special form the Unitarian faith assumes as embodied in the services at his chapel.

Again, as in Mr. Conway's case, I was fortunate in my visit to Little Portland Street Chapel; inasmuch

as I heard what may, I fancy, be fairly considered a typical discourse in reference to the preacher's opinions. The chapel, let me mention, is close to the Oxford Street Circus, and Mr. Martineau preaches * on Sunday mornings only, at 11.15. The congregation is not generally large, but consists entirely of the upper classes, as is evident from the string of carriages outside the door. On arriving at the chapel you find in the vestibule a placard bearing the number of the service about to be performed. This refers to the Book of "Common Prayer for Christian Worship, in Ten Services, for Morning and Evening," compiled by Mr. Martineau himself. The first and second services are simple abridgments of the Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church of England; such portions as have a Trinitarian bearing, everything in the shape of a creed, and all repetitions—*e.g.* of the Lord's Prayer—being omitted, so as to condense it within reasonable limits. The musical portions of the service are well rendered at Little Portland Street, by the choir, not by the congregation; the hymns being taken from a collection compiled by the preacher. In fact, he may parody a well-worn adage, and say "La chapelle, c'est moi."

* Mr. Martineau resigned his position at the close of the year 1872, from ill-health.

Never was system more thoroughly represented by one man than Unitarianism at Little Portland Street by the Rev. James Martineau.

The sermon, which I have ventured also to set down as a fair exponent of the opinions of this school —where they trench most closely on orthodoxy—was on the unlikely subject of the pre-existence of Christ. Mr. Martineau had read as his second lesson John xvii., and selected his text from the 5th verse: "Now, O Father, glorify Thou me, with Thine own Self, with the glory I had with Thee before the world was." This I call an unlikely subject, because, from the stand-point of the humanity of Christ—generally considered characteristic of this body—it is a matter one would have expected to see quietly shelved. Mr. Martineau commenced by saying that the doctrine depends entirely upon the value we assign to the Fourth Gospel. If that were written by John, or one in his position, and fairly represented the words of Christ, there could be no doubt He did claim pre-existence. There are no traces of such a claim in Matthew and Luke. I was not a little surprised to hear the preacher say, "One cannot but smile at the 'Unitarian gloss' which, in order to expunge this doctrine from John's Gospel, makes the words 'What and if ye shall see the Son of Man

ascend up where He was before' mean simply, 'I have been telling you some hard things; what if I were to tell you something harder still?'" There could be no doubt such a doctrine was attributed to Christ by St. John, and the preacher proceeded to argue its probability, its possible source, and its effects on Christ's teaching. He alluded to the two different classes of ideas prevalent among the Jews as to the coming Messiah—the one coarse and literal, pervading the lower classes, peasantry, etc., which assigned no higher office to Messiah than the delivering His nation from the iron sway of Rome. This the educated saw to be hopeless; and the more refined notion of Messiah as a moral deliverer came to be accepted by them, and was the aspect under which that office presented itself to the mind of Jesus Himself. In Egypt, he added, there was not even a personal element of any kind in this expectation. It was not a "coming man" who was looked for, but simply a wider diffusion of the spirit of truth. Now how, out of such a conception of Messiah's office, could Christ extract the idea of pre-existence? It might, Mr. Martineau argued, have come from Persia, which had imported largely into the Hebrew creed the foreign ingredients of tutelary spirits, etc., and therewith, the Oriental idea of metempsychosis. But

it might even have come from His own consciousness. Jesus always distinguished clearly between ideas and sensations. "The want, the sorrow, the humiliation which surrounded Him, He felt to come from without. But His clear sense of duty to God was something within. Whence did it come?" The preacher compared Christ to Socrates in His practical life, and in His martyrdom; but to Plato in His contemplative spirit. "The martyr and the sage were blended in the Divine Man." Mr. Martineau then referred at some length to the doctrine of *anamnesis*, in Plato, according to which the soul had pre-existed in a purer state, and there gained its ideas. It was no disparagement to Jesus, he argued, thus to trace His ideas to a Platonic source, and the effect of such ideas on His teaching were shown to give it much of its simplicity, as also much of its authority. "Holiness," it was well observed, "is never self-conscious. It does not even act with studied reference to good example and influence on others." "Doubtless," concluded the preacher, "when Jesus passed behind the veil of death, He would find that much which He had, in very humility, attributed to Divine ideas gained in His pre-existent state was really due to the promptings of His own pure spirit."

From this brief analysis it will be evident that Mr.

Martineau's sermons are addressed exclusively to an educated audience. Despite a little hardness, the result of the sermon being diligently read from MS. (as is also the prayer that preceded it), there is a vein of poetry running through most of his discourses, which shows that he still adheres to the opinion expressed in 1847 in the preface to his published sermons, "Endeavours after the Christian Life." He there says,—

"In virtue of the close affinity, perhaps ultimate identity of religion and poetry, preaching is essentially a lyric expression of the soul—an utterance of meditation in sorrow, hope, love, and joy, from a representative of the human heart in its divine relations. In proportion as we quit this view, and prominently introduce the idea of a preceptive and monitory function, we retreat from the true prophetic interpretation of the office back into the old sacerdotal; or—what is not, perhaps, so different a distinction as it may appear—from the properly religious to the simply moral."

Unitarianism, however, like other religious systems, is feeling the impetus of the revival spirit which is abroad; and though the Unitarians are never likely to be a largely proselytising body, or, it may be, to extend their principles among the less intellectual classes, we hear of night schools and working men's missions at Bayswater, for instance. Large congregations of the middle and lower classes assemble at

Mr. Spears's chapel in Stamford Street, Blackfriars; whilst at the Portland British Schools (where the prizes were distributed recently after a service in Mr. Martineau's chapel) I find from the report that there has been an average of over 500 children on the books.

There is also another movement at work amongst this body which is likely to mark an epoch in its history, and not improbably to cause a division in its ranks. On the one side there are those who wish to abolish the name "Unitarian" as being in itself dogmatic, and to substitute "Free Christian" as the proper badge of a creedless body. Against this the old Conservative Unitarians, clinging to the traditional title, rebel. Mr. Martineau, as might be expected from his nearness to the "orthodox" faith, sympathises with the less exclusive of these views. Under his auspices, the "Free Christian Union" has been organised, the object of which is to "invite to common action all who deem men responsible, not for the attainment of divine truth, but only for the serious search of it, and who rely for the religious improvement of human life on filial piety and brotherly charity, with or without more particular agreement in matters of doctrinal theology." As a proof of the "broad" basis on which this society rests, it may be

mentioned that the devotional services held at the first anniversary in Freemasons' Hall were conducted by the Rev. James Martineau and the Rev. William Miall, the sermons being preached by the Rev. Athanase Coquerel, of Paris, and the Rev. C. Kegan Paul, Vicar of Sturminster Marshall, Dorset.

Besides these organised bodies (of whose dimensions, I fancy, many "orthodox" Protestants are unaware), there are some outgrowths of a kindred spirit starting into existence at the present time, each having the tendency to secularise religious ideas, and to gather up those erratic spirits that now stand aloof from any definite religious school. In the exercise of the functions entrusted to me, I have visited the afternoon meetings of the "Sunday Lecture Society," and also of the "Church of Progress," each held in St. George's Hall. At the former Dr. Carpenter delivered a lecture on "The Deep Sea." From the verge of "orthodoxy" to a Sunday afternoon discussion on life at 2,500 fathoms below sea! It was a new sensation, reminding one of that furtive visit to the theatre on a Sunday evening on one's first visit to Paris. The hall was well filled by an attentive audience of all classes, who had evidently come, not like myself, out of curiosity, but for the sake of real instruction. It was "a sign of the times" to note the

round of applause with which the announcement was received when the Sunday afternoon lecturer quoted, in proof of some religious learning of his subject, the name of his "friend, the Rev. Charles Kingsley." Then, again, what would our grandsires have said to a performance on Sunday evening of Rossini's "Stabat Mater," with full band and chorus of one hundred and fifty! On the principle, I suppose, that a good thing cannot be repeated too often, Mr. Moncure D. Conway treated us to a repetition of his discourse on "The Church erected to God by Voltaire," delivered only two Sundays before at his own chapel.

From Little Portland Street in the morning to the "Church of Progress" in the evening gave one a tolerably exhaustive view of the outward and visible signs of Unitarianism and the Free Christian Church.

A RELIGIOUS "EPOCH."

THE multiplication of ecclesiastical judgments in recent times has enabled us to generalise in some measure as to the conduct of those who have been the objects of censure; and it can scarcely have failed to strike us that the proceedings, subsequent to the judgment itself, have usually fallen very flat. Before the case came off, there was, in almost every instance, a vaticination that at last the critical moment had come. If So-and-so were condemned, a schism in the National Church would eventuate. Nay, names have been mentioned. Such and such a leader of the particular party under censure would head a Free Church if So-and-so were held heretical. So-and-so has been declared heretical, has been deprived or mulcted, as the case may be; yet still no schism ensues. So-and-

so simply collapses, and retires into no one knows what department of private life. It is the old story of "parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus." A short time since the Mackonochie case was declared to be thus crucial. The Mackonochie judgment came, and yet no breach ensued. Nothing, indeed, could have been more tame and spiritless than the way in which the judgment fell into the ranks of advanced Ritualism. Then the beginning of the end was deferred to the prosecution of Mr. Bennett; the Bennett decision also came and went, and probably the end is as far off as ever.

In the meantime, the Voysey case occurred, which was to have breached the position from another quarter. That event has come and gone, and still the walls of the National Establishment remained as entire as though they were really impregnable. Now, however, it seems that the apathy with which the decision was received is apparent rather than real. The silence is only that which precedes the storm. Suddenly announcements appeared in the public papers that the Rev. Charles Voysey would occupy the rostrum at the "Sunday Evenings for the People, St. George's Hall, Langham Place," organised by the National Sunday League, taking as the subject of his discourse, "An Episode in the History of Religious

Liberty;" the council expressing a hope that a considerable sum would be realised towards a fund for establishing him in London. Such an announcement would have been quite sufficient to draw together a large audience, without the combined attractions of "sacred music, by soloists, bands, and chorus." In fact, by an early hour on the previous Saturday no reserved tickets were to be obtained for love or—that usually more marketable commodity—money.

Before the hour appointed for the lecture the hall was filled with a vast audience; and the stage occupied by a band and chorus proportionately meagre, in front of which a sort of pulpit had been erected for the lecturer. An excruciating chorus having been performed in the feeblest manner, Mr. Voysey appeared at his post and was received with enthusiastic applause. After a brief apology on the score of what the prospective lecture ought to have been, he plunged at once into the history of his personal connection with the Church of England during the last twenty years. A quarter of a century ago he was what he called "converted," and felt strong vocation for the ministry, but lacked means of carrying out his plans. A certain society for the support at the University of youths who felt a call for the ministry sent him to Oxford, upon a severe scrutiny as to his fitness. After

a protracted paper examination, the candidate was handed over to eight clergymen who examined him not only on doctrinal but spiritual matters. So he matriculated, and, during his college course, had to forward a terminal report of "spiritual progress" to the secretaries of the society. Eventually he rebelled against this bondage, "and this rebellion," he said, "has ended in a liberty for which I have to thank that society and those secretaries." It was considered "slow" to go to church in those days, but the lecturer attended all the University sermons, and found out that any possible doctrine could be sheltered under the Thirty-nine Articles. Oxford, he said, was at that time the place to encourage young searchers after truth, by the very diversity of doctrines they heard enunciated from the University pulpit. The society, as a punishment for his rebellion, took his name off the books, and he was sent out into the world penniless, within a year of his degree. He was reinstated by one whom he would venture to name as a "dear old saint," who, though a strong Calvinist, respected his sincerity, and maintained him until he had taken his degree. This was the Rev. John Hill, Vice-Principal and Tutor of St. Edmund Hall. He obtained his degree and college testimonials, and was ordained in 1852 by Dr. Musgrave

in York Minster, "the same place," he observed, "where, in 1871, I was tried for heresy." Mr. Voysey then detailed at great length the rise and spread of the Tractarian movement at Oxford, and the strong Evangelical opposition with which it was met; whilst the subsequent Broad Church party showed itself adverse to each of these systems alike. Returning to his own case, he narrated his removal from curacy to curacy in consequence of his persistent opposition to dogmatism. This portion of the lecture, which referred to the period prior to his being beneficed at Healaugh, having occupied nearly an hour in delivery, Mr. Voysey said that, in order to prevent himself or his audience from being wearied, some music would be inserted; and, whether by way of travestie on the Babel he had been sketching, I cannot say, but the singers struck up the suggestive selection from St. Paul, "How lovely are the messengers that preach us *the Gospel of Peace.*"

Mr. Voysey then referred to the publication of "The Sling and the Stone." He had always laid down for himself the rule not to say one word in the pulpit which he did not then and there believe to be true. Still, whilst unbeneficed, he had avoided openly attacking error. This answered for ten or eleven years. The time was not ripe. He had gained little by his

reticence. He had been punished for heresy, and handed on from curacy to curacy. When beneficed, he determined to do what he could to get rid of religious slavery. He was as anxious to teach his own parishioners the truth as he was to teach his own children. "And so," he said, "I set myself to weaken the Bible by exposing its errors as to the relations between God and man, contrasting its many noble truths with its many abominations." In 1865, the Healaugh sermons were published as "The Sling and the Stone," first to set the example of attacking dogma, and secondly to show that the doing so was acceptable to the people. The work was largely read by clergy and laity. He wished it to be distinctly understood that it was in no sense true that "The Sling and the Stone" was put forth to excite prosecution. He only wanted the public to profit by the teaching of his country parish, and to set them thinking. At first the attempt was made to "snuff out" "The Sling and the Stone." The religious papers did not touch it. A bishop said in Convocation that it was "not worth reading," and the announcement brought hundreds of readers. The English Church Union marked him for their own. One gentleman confessed that it was "dangerous" and the writer a "scandal," and went over to the Church of Rome,

leaving a benefice of £1000 a year, on account of the apathy of the authorities in hesitating to attack it. Eventually, the English Church Union and the Church Association offered £500 each for the prosecution, and the latter body printed and circulated extracts from "The Sling and the Stone." "So you see," he exclaimed, "I have very much to be thankful for." The lecturer spoke quite respectfully of the recent judgment, which, he said, was inevitable if the Thirty-nine Articles be made the criterion of truth. He had been condemned on thirteen out of fifteen points. He had feared only being condemned on one or two, which might have made his position more difficult. Speaking of the Thirty-nine Articles, which all along formed his chief subject of objurgation, he moved his audience to mirth by quoting, in reference to "those venerable Thirty-nine Articles," the text, "Whosoever shall fall on that stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it falleth, it shall grind him to powder."

With regard to the course he intended to pursue, the lecturer gave it out as his determination to identify himself, for the present, with no sect, though having left the Church of England. Detached from all corporate bodies, he expressed a wish that this fact might form no bar to an interchange of pulpits with all who might desire it. (Mr. Voysey had, it may be men-

tioned, preached that same morning in the Unitarian Church at Croydon.) He hoped to establish a weekly service somewhere in London—a statement which elicited loud applause. The devotional part of this he wished to make an expression of religious feeling without superstition or idolatry. He should call in the aid of music, and carefully avoid making his service too long or too "rigid." Any form that might be adopted would be subject to alteration to suit the tastes of the congregation. In the pulpit he would claim that liberty which he was ready to concede to others, and hoped his own expulsion would speedily lead to that of the Thirty-nine Articles.

The lecture, which lasted over two hours, was listened to with unflagging attention and interrupted by frequent bursts of applause.

Such was the dawn of a new religious "epoch."

A SUNDAY LECTURE BY PROFESSOR HUXLEY.

When first I commenced these heterodox effusions—at once the evidence and history of my own wanderings out of the ordinary grooves and ruts of "orthodox" ideas—and while I was still lingering near the North Pole of Unorthodoxy, I mentioned, in passing, my visit to St. George's Hall on a Sunday afternoon to hear Dr. Carpenter lecture on "The Deep Sea." The fact of my having received a circular from the "Sunday Lecture Society," containing a statement of their past operations and projected work, showed me, not only that the work whose commencement I then chronicled was still going on, but that it was progressing with every sign of success, and endorsed with the names of approvers so eminent as scarcely to

allow of its being passed over silently in a series of papers professing to represent the current phases of religious life in London. Besides the world-known name of Professor Huxley, the lecturer for the day, I found such names as Dr. Spencer Cobbold, Professor Blackie, and Erasmus Wilson among the others; while, as though to remove any doubts as to the "propriety" of devoting a Sunday to science instead of religion, specially so-called—for may not the two be made synonymous?—I descried two "reverend" titles among the lecturers. Rev. Allen D. Graham, M.A., Oxon. (designated in 'Crockford for 1868' as Curate of St. Paul's, Covent Garden), was to enlighten the Sunday audience on "Witchcraft, and the Lessons we learn from it;" Rev. Professor Lewis Campbell, M.A., Oxon. (described as formerly Tutor of Queen's College, Oxford, and Vicar of Milford, Hants, now Professor of Greek in the University of St. Andrew's), was also announced, though without his subject being named. Need I say that these reverend titles removed any lingering scruples, and that I resolved to make Professor Huxley my preacher for the day? In sober earnest, this Sunday Lecture Society had become now a *fait accompli*, and demanded notice. A few years ago, such an institution would have been deemed an impossibility. We might well ask, then,

as Mr. Bellew did ask three times every week from that very rostrum :—

> "Can such things be,
> And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
> Without our special *notice ?*"

Right or wrong, the thing deserved to be known. The circular of the society said—and I believe truly —"The committee have spent, since the month of December, upwards of £70 merely in advertising in the newspapers. No fewer than 6000 circulars, containing the list of persons approving the objects of the society, and 16,000 of the handbills announcing the present series of lectures, have been printed and distributed. Yet, notwithstanding this, the committee believe that the society's lectures are but little known of (*sic*) by residents in London, or even in the immediate vicinity of St. George's Hall." Repeating my original *cautela*, then, that my mission is simply to describe, not to criticize or pronounce for or against, I give the records of this Sunday's experience in the scientific portion of "Unorthodox London."

The subject chosen by Professor Huxley was, "The Forefathers of the English People on the Mainland of Europe and Asia." He commenced by calling the attention of his audience to the two types of *physique*

noticeable at the present day in Britain—the one tall, fair and light-haired, the other short and dark, with curling black hair. Passing over the gradations obtained by intermixture, he found that these two types were existent in the earliest accounts of Britain — those, namely, of Cæsar, Tacitus, and Strabo — which descriptions stood in much the same relation to the Romans as Captain Cook's account of Tahiti to us. Cæsar tells us of the fair-haired inhabitants of Kent; Tacitus mentions the dark Silures of South Wales. In a linguistic point of view the peoples were one; for English were non-existent, and there were only the two types of Celtic—the Cymric and Gaelic. The two races then were one, and the problem is, whence came these two races with one language? Geography gives a suggestion. The east coast of England is separated by a brief space of sea from Scandinavia, Denmark, North Germany, and the north of France. In the same way the south and south-east of England are separated by a still smaller space from France. Now, we may check the obvious inference deducible herefrom by noticing the distribution of races on the Continent. It would be possible, Professor Huxley observed, to draw an oblique line from the mouth of the Seine to the mouth of the Rhone, and divide the

tall fair people north of that line from the short dark people south of it. This fact is confirmed by the statistics of stature drawn up for purposes of the conscription. Such a line might, in fact, extend from the north of Ireland to the Himalayas, and still to the north would be the tall fair people, and to the south, the short dark. Such a difference was not traceable to climate, because still further north you come again upon dark people, to wit, the Laps, a Mongolian race quite distinct from the dark people of the south. The combined Continent may, then, be divided into three zones or belts: 1, the dark Laps; 2, the fair Celts; 3, the dark Celts. The distinction comes to be, then, between the Xantho-chroi, or tall and fair, and the Melano-chroi, or dark. The inference, therefore, was, that these two divisions of Celts came from the Continent to our island. The invasion of the Saxons, Jutes, Danes, and Northmen changed the language of Britain, *but added no new physical element.* Therefore, argued the Professor, we must not talk any more of Celts and Saxons, for all are one. "I never lose an opportunity of rooting up that false idea that the Celts and Saxons are different races." If Professor Huxley could only get Pat to recognize this, he might do more to root out Fenianism than the suspension of Habeas Corpus or any amount of Church and Land Tenure Bills!

Professor Huxley went on to prove the identity of the Gauls and Germans in the earliest historical times. Both were a fair-haired race, of tall stature and powerful frame. He compared their habits, going into some amusing details—for instance, these Celts were eminently a trouser-wearing race. Gaul was divided into Braccata and Togata—the former Celtic, the latter Roman. The Highland costume of the present day, therefore, was eminently unnational. It was Roman, not Celtic. The Germans, too, were the earliest known possessors of soap; proving again —as in their adoption of trousers—their superiority over the Romans. Possibly, however, the soap was used rather as an ornament than for purposes of cleanliness, to redden the hair—a process still adopted in the Fiji Islands. The hypothesis finally advanced was that the tall fair people north of the line above mentioned, breaking through the natural barriers of the Alps, Carpathians, and Hercynian forest in Europe, as through the Himalayas in India, dispossessed and virtually exterminated the dark people to the south, driving them into mountain districts, as the Britons were afterwards driven by successive invaders into Cornwall and Wales. The dark people are the remains of the southern mountaineers, sometimes, as in the case of the Basque people, proving

their separate origin by linguistic peculiarities, whilst the resemblances of Sanscrit, Latin, Greek, and modern European languages attest the supremacy of the nomadic inhabitants of the northern plains, across which, Professor Huxley observed, "you might drive a cart for four or five thousand miles from Holland to China without encountering any elevation worth speaking of." So, then, the upshot is, we are all one people, and, as was quaintly said, "it is wicked to talk about Anglo-Saxons." Teuton and Celt are distinctions without a difference from this time forth and for evermore.

The audience was a very large and intelligent one, comprising many eminent scientific men, quite a fair quota of ladies, a sprinkling of the rising generation, and altogether a collection of heads that would have delighted a phrenologist or physiognomist. Surely there is another old prejudice that must be rooted up by such a gathering as this. Whatever else we may be called, the English people must no longer be set down as a race of unmitigated Sabbatarians.

It is against this, and this only, that the Sunday Lecture Society desire to protest. They are not a Church, like the body that gathers in the same hall later in the day, and calls itself "The Church of Progress." They carefully avoid all theological sub-

jects; but they hold that "History, Literature, and Art, especially in their bearing upon the improvement and social well-being of mankind," are proper subjects for Sunday study. It would be difficult to assail such a position—very difficult to say where the practical sermon merges into the lecture. Then, again, the persons who attended the Sunday lecture, one could see at a glance, were not the people who go to church or are likely to do so until the calibre of the clergy and the style of sermons are widely different from the present. Mr. Conway's congregation, as well as Mr. Conway himself, and several leading Unitarians, were present; but those who are familiar with Unitarian sermons, or with Mr. Conway's discourses, will be aware there is but an ill-defined frontier line between them and a lecture by Professor Huxley. It will probably take some time to familiarize the present generation with Sunday lectures. There will be need of caution lest

Dum fugiunt stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.

We do not want the Continental Sunday in London. In fact, despite all their small scorn of our Sabbatarianism, our Continental neighbours are to a large extent adopting and appreciating our English "Lord's Day." But there is a wide difference between opening theatres and music-halls on Sunday,

and opening museums or giving lectures on science and kindred subjects. Probably all, except very extreme religionists, will agree that, next to going to church, attending such a lecture as the one I have sketched above is a legitimate mode of spending Sunday; indeed, we may yet see the day when even those who go to church in the morning, and perchance the evening too, may still find time in the afternoon for such an interesting disquisition as the one I listened to on the subject of our forefathers in the olden time.

TABERNACLES.—MR. VARLEY AND MR. SPURGEON.

It is at the point where religious systems, avoiding the trammels of Establishment, strike the limits of doctrinal orthodoxy, that they become important agencies for leavening the masses. Few men, and fewer women, are by nature philosophical in their belief; and, even of these, only a minority venture out of the beaten paths of faith and practice—venture, if one may so say, to be *original* in these matters. So it is that large numbers, fretting at the restraints of the Establishment, differ from it in nothing else than emancipation from such restraints. The more advanced of Protestant Dissenters, and the lowest of Low Churchmen, meet and blend imperceptibly one with the other; Protestant Dissent being a form

of belief that tells largely upon the lowest middle and poor classes of London. Of this fact, the tabernacles stand the witnesses, and Mr. Varley is, to a large extent, the representative man. There are special gifts in Mr. Spurgeon's case, which render him exceptional rather than representative. For many years Mr. Varley carried on the business of a butcher, in the Bayswater Road, and, during that period, managed to build the Free Tabernacle, in St. James's Square, Notting Hill, with accommodation for 1200 worshippers, at a cost of £2000, and also schools for boys and girls, where, at the time of my visit, 550 children were being educated. The dimensions of the Tabernacle pretty fairly represent the congregation, that is, it is nearly always filled; and so great are the demands on Mr. Varley's time, in the way of preaching and pastoral work, that he has now given up business, and devotes himself entirely to ministerial labours. On the occasion of my visiting the Tabernacle, a bitter morning, I found it nearly full. The seats are entirely free and unappropriated—one great attraction for the poor, which, with the more elastic liturgy, constitutes the secret why they will go to chapel, and will not go to church. It is a fact we have to face: Mr. Varley was able to speak to the working man *in propriâ personâ* of his temptations "in the brickfield

and on the scaffold;" not merely to talk of him as a sort of curious animal, amongst well-dressed worshippers. It should be noticed, too, that there is no "preaching down" to the level of the uneducated. The sermon would have done credit to any Established church in London. It was preceded by three cheerful hymns, sung by the whole congregation. There was a small choir, and a harmonium to lead it, and every man, woman, and child sang for himself. Praise, with them, was a part of worship. Between the hymns there was a reading of Scripture, with an exposition, in the shape of a running comment on the chapters read. The selections were from the Pauline Epistles, and bore rather on nice doctrinal points, than on the broad tendency of Christianity. What sounded very strangely, in the ears of one of a stricter sect, was that, even in giving out the hymns, Mr. Varley criticized and commented on expressions occurring in them. A prayer followed the second hymn—extempore, of course, and very earnest, but curiously accompanied with gesticulation. The subject of the sermon was, "The veil on the heart," from the text 2 Cor. xii. 18. Mr. Varley referred to the case of Moses veiling his face, and immediately proceeded to apply the incident to the case of unbelief veiling the heart of hearers. It was a plain but practical dis-

course, which might have been preached in any church in Notting Hill—and would have astonished some of the congregations if it had been—delivered without notes, in a clear, fluent style, and with just enough emphasis and gesticulation to carry home the words, but never for a moment degenerating into the least symptom of rant. The celebration of the Lord's Supper followed, and the smallness of the numbers who partook of it bore practical evidence to the fact that every vestige of the sacramental system had died out of this body.

The Communion does not even form here what it becomes to the "lowest" of Established churchmen—the test of membership. The sole "test" or qualification appears to be faith in Christ, and, as far as can be judged, renewal of life. I could not but confess, as the long processions filed past me down naive and aisles at the conclusion of the service, that here was machinery admirably adapted to the work it had set itself to do, the influencing of the poor and the lowest middle classes—those very ones who manage to elude the grasp of systems more elaborately formulated and officered. The great secret is that a man like Mr. Varley, without descending, adapts himself to the requirements of his flock, and so his words are unlike our studied pulpit phrase, which

is confessedly too often a tongue "not understanded of the people."

As most persons have, at some time or other, visited Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle at Newington, on a Sunday, and the characteristics of that gentleman's preaching are therefore generally familiar, a few words will suffice to record my own impressions on this subject. Indeed, the immediate effects of his oratory are even less striking than the numerous works of beneficence and elaborate ecclesiastical system, which, around the Metropolitan Tabernacle as their centre, have grown up as the indirect results of his preaching and personal influence. Never did I witness a happier sight than that which greeted me inside the walls of Mr. Spurgeon's Orphanage at Stockwell, in contrast to the dull, dark February morning outside. Here some 220 boys were boarded, clothed, and taught. They are lodged, not in large, uncomfortable corridors and halls, but in separate houses presided over by matrons—each a little home in itself. Nothing can exceed the comfort of all arrangements in this Orphanage. It was "visiting" day when I was there, but even the attractions of widowed mothers and indulgent relations were not sufficient to distract the attention of chubby juveniles from Mr. Spurgeon, whom they hailed with the

greatest enthusiasm, unmingled with the smallest awe. From the Orphanage I passed to the Almshouses and Schools at Newington, close to the Elephant and Castle station of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway. In these schools, again, I was struck with the perfect order which reigned. A hundred and thirty boys moved like one compact mass, and sang their part-songs most creditably. Thence I passed to the Tabernacle itself. Now, I fancy, most persons have the idea that this is simply a "preaching-shop," closed and doing nothing from Sunday to Sunday. Never was there a greater mistake. It is a perfect hive of busy workers, from seven every morning until night. The rooms behind and under this vast edifice are appropriated to the use of the Pastors' College, where young men are trained for the ministry without expense. They are boarded singly, also free, with families residing in the neighbourhood,—a plan adopted partly to avoid the temptations of "collegiate" life, and also to fit the young men for the humble positions in life most of them are destined to occupy. Here, again, dropping in quite unexpectedly, we found every one at his post, and the whole complicated machinery working without a hitch. In one room we opened the door on some thirty or forty young men celebrating the Lord's

Supper. In another we found an aged lady, with about twenty grown-up girls around her, conducting a Bible-class. In the spacious rooms below, tables were being laid for 1600 for tea, as the annual church meeting was to be held in the evening. A secretary, and two clerks under him, besides Mr. Spurgeon's private secretary, form the staff required for conducting the correspondence. Nor was this all; in another room was a man up to his eyes in books, whose business it was to manage the "colportage;" whilst in yet another was a sort of local Mudie's, where boxes of books are packed, and sent to former students, now pastors of outlying chapels, and by them circulated from one to the other. Over all this labyrinth I was conducted in the most cheery way by the Atlas who bears on his single pair of shoulders the whole mass; and this is the man whom we are too apt to regard as merely the preacher on Sundays. "Mr. Spurgeon," I could not help saying, "you are a regular Pope." "Yes," he replied, "though without claiming infallibility. This is a democracy, with a very large infusion of constitutional monarchy in it."

Then, again, with regard to the discipline of this body, which we are apt to underrate. Certainly no system of direction that ever was organized could equal the hold which, by means of his elders and

deacons, this pastor has over his flock. "I have 4200 members on my church books," said he, "and if one of them got tipsy I should probably hear of it before the week was out." The records of admission to the church, of "dismission" to other churches, and reception from them, are kept with the precision of a merchant's books, whilst each member of the church has a set of twelve communion tickets, all ready perforated, with dates printed, one of which he or she is bound to tear off and put in the plate each month, to attest presence at "the ordinance." The punishment, in case of neglect, or of moral failings, is censure and excommunication.

Mr. Spurgeon attributes all this success to the power of prayer. Twenty thousand pounds were given him by one lady, a member of a different religious body, to found his Orphanage. On more than one occasion £2000 at a time have been dropped into his letter box; he has no idea by whom. When recently attacked by illness, he began to despair, but that same evening a lady left £500 at his door, and £1000 came in immediately afterwards. The world will, perhaps, more readily attribute all this to his immense personal influence, and will therefore be surprised to hear that he is in private life the most modest, unassuming, and genial of men.

He pointed to his bookshelves, where were his sermons translated into Welsh, French, German, Swedish, Italian, Dutch, to say nothing of endless American editions. Many of these foreign versions were produced without the publishers even sending him a copy, and were picked up casually by him in his travels. One edition, in good readable German type, was largely sold at the Leipzig Book Fair. This is enough to turn a man's head, but he speaks of himself in the most modest terms as "no scholar."

I could not learn the precise accommodation afforded in the Tabernacle, but was able to make some approximation by being informed that the area, including galleries, was about double that of Exeter Hall, which holds 3000. This is filled in every nook and corner on Sundays. The service commences at a quarter to eleven, and long before that hour an eager crowd assembles outside. At five minutes before service time the doors are all thrown open to the public, and no seats reserved—a very good way of ensuring regularity amongst the seat-holders. When Mr. Spurgeon makes his appearance at eleven, therefore, the whole place is completely filled. The congregation seems very equally divided among males and females, and consists almost exclusively of the

middle class. There is no symptom of the very poor, or, to judge by outward appearance, of the very rich. Except a few old ladies seated round the bema, one does not see any possible source for all those thousands of pounds. The service consists of a short prayer of about five minutes; then a hymn sung—of course, in unison—by the whole congregation, without accompaniment of any kind, one man only standing beside Mr. Spurgeon to give the pitch. A reading and exposition of Scripture follow, the chapter chosen on the occasion of my visit being Colossians i. A second and much longer extempore prayer follows. In this I was considerably surprised to hear a quotation from Keble's 'Christian Year'—

> "O, may no earth-born cloud arise,
> To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes!"

and also one from the Church of England service, "In all our works begun, continued, and ended in Thee." Another hymn followed; and one cannot fail to be struck with the effect of these simple tunes sung by so vast a body of voices. One can quite understand Mendelssohn's being so overcome as to shed tears when listening to the charity-children singing under the dome of St. Paul's. The simple service I have

here described occupied more than an hour, and then followed the sermon. It was taken from the last verse of the chapter read as the lesson, viz., Colossians i. 29,—"Whereunto I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily." Its subject was the co-operation of man's individual effort with the influences of the Holy Spirit in the work of his own and his neighbours' salvation. It was a sound practical discourse, of upwards of an hour in length, delivered without note of any kind, with all the preacher's old earnestness, but without a single trace of his former eccentricity. There was not a single "Spurgeonism" from beginning to end; or, at least, the only approach thereto was an assurance that we "couldn't go to heaven on a feather bed." Remembering what Mr. Spurgeon was when he came to London seventeen years ago, a boy of nineteen, one cannot but congratulate him on the change; while the vast building, with all its varied works—happily compared by himself to the cathedral in ancient times—bears witness to the sterling stuff there was in the man below all his eccentricity. What particularly struck me was his constant and copious reference to such authorities as Augustine, Chrysostom, and Gregory of Nazianzen. He also retains all his old fertility of illustration; witness a

capital story by which he illustrated the position that the work of the Holy Spirit in a man does not destroy the necessity of individual action, or reduce man to a mere machine. "In the square of St. Mark at Venice," he said, "there is a clock, and two bronze figures of men strike the hours on a bell. Nobody dreams of thanking the bronze men for doing so. One day an inquisitive stranger put his head between the hammer and the bell, and the bronze man knocked his brains out; but nobody suggested that the bronze man should be hanged. We don't want *bronze men and women* for Christian work."

Altogether the service and sermon lasted over two hours, and all was done by one man. Yet I saw Mr. Spurgeon in his private room afterwards, and found him as fresh and full-voiced as ever. He tossed me over half a sheet of note paper, which looked like the back of an old letter, asking me if I would like to have his sermon. There I found a clearly written and logically divided skeleton of the discourse I had just heard, which I retain among my archives of Unorthodox London.

It struck me—this Tabernacle service—as like the old institution of prophecy in contradistinction to the priesthood of the Jewish Church, an institution we

were too long accustomed to look upon as simply irregular and enthusiastic, but which later knowledge has shown to have been formulated in schools, and almost as elaborately disciplined as the established priesthood itself.

TABERNACLE RANTERS.

It was after this undignified title—against which I desire *in limine* to protest—was applied to the Primitive Methodists in my presence that I was counselled to adjourn to Mr. Spurgeon's gigantic chapel at Newington, to witness the proceedings of that body, at whose disposal the building is annually placed for their missionary meeting. Accordingly, I set out one May evening to see the Tabernacle "on the rant," expecting something very grotesque indeed. Something very strange and foreign to my ordinary experiences I did witness: and I fancy the occasion was far enough removed from common customs to render an account of it interesting. The Primitive Methodists, or "Ranters," as they are opprobriously termed, represent more truly the original genius of Wesleyan

Methodism than any of the various bodies—and their name is legion—into which the original secession from the Church of England has split up. When the other sections began to combine the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove, these Conservative Methodists still stuck to their old camp meetings, and, "the authorities" disapproving of such proceedings, a collision, and consequent exclusion, took place in 1808: for it is not only Rome that sniffs heresy in independent thought or action. "Religion," it has been said, "according to these notions, is mainly dependent upon sudden and powerful excitement, to be produced by external causes. The means of excitement usually employed are singing, frequent public prayer-meetings, loud exclamations, the preaching of females, long-continued religious services, congregations assembled in the open air, and the separation of worshippers into different smaller communities, according to their professed religious condition. A camp meeting itself is an attempt to employ all these means at once, and in the highest state of energy."

With this popular idea of Primitive Methodism in my mind I reached Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle at six o'clock on the evening in question, and found symptoms of the camp meeting even at Newington. Large vans of country people were being disembarked at

the doors; and a glance at the interior of the conveyances showed that material provision had not been forgotten through anxiety for spiritual food. I found the Tabernacle about three-parts filled with people of all classes, but mostly of the lower middle and poor, A vigorous hymn was being sung, evidently by every man, woman, and child in the place, as I entered and took my seat; after which a very long extemporaneous prayer was offered by a gentleman with a stentorian voice; a second hymn followed, and the business of the evening may then be said to have commenced. That business was ostensibly a missionary meeting, which involved appointing a chairman and reading a report. To the former position a gentleman with a broad Northern accent was called, whose name was Burnitt, and described by the gentleman who introduced him as "a successful London merchant, but also—what was better still—a Primitive Methodist, professing and official." From the report it appeared that the first Primitive Methodist Mission Meeting was held near Belper, forty-nine years ago, when the poor people contributed their pence. Since that time, the progress of contributions had been very marked. In 1843 the income of the society was £845; in 1849, £3,000; in 1856, £10,000; in 1863, £16,255; and in 1869, £20,398. The distinguishing feature of the

present year had been the establishment of the first African mission, on a little island in the Gulf of Guinea, where there was no Christian, "unless a Jesuit could be called one." Here I heard the first symptoms of those utterances which afterwards occurred at frequent intervals during the meeting—"Hallelujah," "Glory be to God!"—and which I hope it will not be considered irreverent if I insert parenthetically, after the manner of reporters. There was an old lady just behind me who fired off her Hallelujahs like pistol-shots; and, in fact, these interjectional utterances constantly went round the whole of the vast assembly like an irregular discharge of musketry, often bursting into a regular volley when something very telling was said, as, for instance, about "Church parsons," or the futility of receiving orders "through the soft fat palm of a Bishop." I am free to confess, however, that the "rant" I heard that evening—if so it is to be termed—was rant of a very high order, and, in one instance at least, approached very nearly to natural eloquence, which only required cultivation to make it acceptable in any assembly. A proposal, at the conclusion of the report, to swell the already large income of the society by getting each one of the Connection to abandon beer and tobacco was received with much favour and

a great many Hallelujahs. I cannot refrain from interpolating here a story on the subject of these exclamatory habits. A lady sat at a Primitive Methodist chapel, close by a poor man who was remarkably ill shod, and whose exclamations were in inverse proportion to his shoe-leather. He kept crying out "Glory be to God!" until he quite annoyed her; and, on leaving chapel, the lady told him such was the case, promising him a new pair of boots if he would restrain himself within due bounds. He did so for several days; but afterwards some particularly exciting cause occurred, and he started up in chapel, shouting out, "*Boots, or no boots,* glory be to God!"

I notice that there is something in the constitution of the Primitive Methodist fatal to the conventional usage of the letter H, though I am bound to confess that its absence in one position is compensated by unlimited aspirations where it does not ordinarily appear. I mention this as really the only drawback to the encomium I have to pronounce on the speeches. The Rev. — Whittaker, of Doncaster, gave me some curious statistics on the subject of the growth of Popery in England. Five hundred of the Church of England clergy had "gone over" since 1845. The curate of a London parish had been recognized as having officiated in full Popish vestments

in a Catholic church at Rome; and there were 960 clergymen in Church of England pulpits who had received their orders from Rome! This is startling. The Pope and Cardinals, it appeared, had met, and confessed that the great hindrance to Popery in England was—Primitive Methodism. This gentleman, who spoke at great length, had also some original notions on the "Commercial Value of a Converted Englishman." There was, he said, little use in a sleepy "Hasia-hatic," but there was "henergy in the Henglish" which made them worth converting. A Frenchman, too, he told us, if he were put on an island peopled by savages, would soon be tattooed like the rest of them; whereas an Englishman would, in the same period of the time, convert them all to decency and dress-coats. At the close of this gentleman's address, I found that the audience, both adult and infantile—the latter abounded—regaled themselves, or were regaled by their mammas, with refreshment. The President of the Conference was followed by a Mr. Pugh, who expatiated over a wide field. Going through the different religions of the world, he came to the conclusion that there were nearly 700,000,000 without God or hope. There were, in round numbers, 300,000,000 Christians, but many of these were "dark." Evangelical Protestantism only numbered

the small fraction of 80,000,000. Infidel philosophy, he remarked, denies a soul to Africans (a fact of which I was not aware), but Jesus Christ liked to "experimentalise on difficult cases," which were declared hopeless. This gentleman was great at quoting hymns; and, as some familiar line struck their ears, the listeners would shout out, "I know it. Hallelujah!" In fact, so great was the enthusiasm roused by this gentleman's quotations, that he had to request his auditory to restrain themselves until he came to the end of each verse, and "then cry Hallelujah as long as they liked."

By the time the collection came on, the huge Tabernacle was filled, and the lights were turned on to the full. The sight was most impressive, and the collection hymn sung in unison by that vast body of voice was quite overpowering.

The Rev. — Kennedy, M.A., a Congregationalist, made a short speech, in which he said he thought the Primitive Methodists were the best hands at getting people into the Kingdom; but his denomination took better care of them when they got there. At the same time he confessed he had never baptised more than one Primitive Methodist, and he did not turn out very well. Hereupon the last speaker, the Rev. — Guttery, of Wolverhampton (described by the

chairman as a "foost-rate star"), got up, and jocosely took the last speaker to task on having professed to nurse the infants to whom Methodism gave birth, and then pleaded guilty to the fact that the first time he "washed" one of the infants it took so bad a cold that it never quite recovered. This gentleman, I must admit, possesses great elocutionary powers, and far exceeded the other speakers in culture. He even ventured on a bit of Latin, "Unum *summus* (*i.e.* sumus) corpus in Christo." (The Hallelujahs which followed a translation of this were loud and long-continued.) He combated the idea of danger from Popery or Infidelity, graphically sketching the work of Wilberforce and Peabody, and challenging infidelity to show such fruits. "The world," he said, "is gathering round the Carpenter's Son. 'Ecce Homo' and 'Ecce Deus' are but straws that show which way the wind is blowing;" and "what was Christ but the Great Philanthropist?" Speaking of the growth of the connection, he said—and the idea of the estimate was original—"Once in every six hours the pearly gates of heaven are thrown back for a Primitive Methodist to pass behind them." Then he waxed political. "Politics are not to be left to Church parsons." (Great Hallelujahs, Glory be to God!) "I have great confidence in Gladstone, and so I have in him

from Birmingham—him with the broad shoulders." "I want to see the Church freed from the State. It puts me in mind of the story of a wife who was going to die, and said to her husband, 'John, what'll ye do without me when I'm gone?' 'Oh, Janie, I shall manage,' he replied. So may the Church say, 'I shall manage' when the Bishops have gone out of the House of Lords—as they will go." "Look at the Bishops on the Irish Church question," he said. "They gave up the principle without a struggle; but they fought *like Methodists* for the cash." "It puts me in mind of the story of Robert Hall and the Church parson. The parson couldn't see the fact of Hall being in orders. Hall wrote the word 'God' very small, and asked him, 'Can you see that?' 'Yes,' he said, 'perfectly.' He then laid a sovereign over it, and said, 'Can you see it now?' 'No, of course I can't, because you've put the money on it.' 'And that's the reason why you can't recognize my orders,' said Hall; 'the *cash* prevents you.'" He concluded by comparing his own orders with those of the Church of England. "They love to trace theirs link by link back to the Apostles; but there's only one link in my chain. I derive my orders, as Paul did, straight from Christ, not from the fat palm of a Bishop's hand!" Amid the storm of plaudits that

followed this speech I came away, after having sat four hours; and, passing amid the crowd of Chick's vans and light carts outside the Tabernacle, could not but feel I had seen strange things that night, and that there was a good deal of "method" in the "madness" —even if madness it were—of the Ranters at the Tabernacle.

A PASTOR'S FAREWELL.

WITHOUT discussing the relative merits of church patronage and the voluntary principle, it is quite evident that under the latter system the personal character and influence of the minister are brought into more decided prominence, and, consequently, the rupture of those ties which always exist between a pastor and congregation becomes individualised on both sides. Even in great establishments, where, if patronage is not quite capricious, appointments are anything but elective, the coming or going of a new incumbent or new curate is always an event in the parish. Crowds will assemble to hear the former wearily plod through the Thirty-nine Articles, or see whether the latter looks very nervous at being "trotted out;" and when the parting comes, in either

case, every little Sunday-school scholar is ready with her mite for the large Bible or pocket communion service, which shall take its humble place beside the silver tea-pot from the district visitors, and the well-filled purse of guineas from the congregation on the inevitable day of the presentation. But still in such cases it is very much a matter of routine. "Le roi est mort, vive le roi," might, save in exceptional cases of personal influence, be the motto of each parishioner. It is otherwise when that parishioner has had a voice in the election of a pastor, whom he conscientiously believes to be "the right man in the right place." That man's coming is a personal assertion of principle on the part of those who appointed him, whilst his going is felt as an individual loss, almost equivalent to a breach in the family circle.

In a pastorate of forty years, the Rev. Dr. Brock, whose farewell I am about to chronicle, has only filled two ministries—that of St. Mary's Church, Norwich, to which he was appointed in 1832, and Bloomsbury Chapel, where he commenced his ministrations on the 5th of December, 1848. The handsome structure, so well known from its position at the bottom of Gower Street, between Bedford Episcopal Chapel on the one side, and the French Church on the other, was the first of such edifices built by Sir

Morton—then Mr.—Peto, and accommodates between 1500 and 1600 persons. There Mr. Brock, who has taken his degree of Doctor of Divinity since that period, formed his church, and has filled a position in the ranks of the Baptist body second to none, with the single exception of Mr. Spurgeon.

It is no small criterion of the character and tact of a man in Dr. Brock's position that he has always been on terms of Christian fellowship, which in more than one case ripened into personal acquaintance and friendliness, with the incumbents of the two neighbouring churches of the Establishment, St. Giles's-in-the-Fields and St. George's, Bloomsbury. It is not enough to say that the rectors of those churches have generally been of evangelical proclivities, and so gravitated naturally in the direction of a neighbouring minister, prominent in the ranks of nonconformity. Tenaciousness often arises from the very fact of such proximity, local and doctrinal; but nothing of the kind has resulted in Dr. Brock's case, and the neighbourhood has gained from the circumstance. The St. Giles's Refuge, for instance, is supported by the ministers of the three places of worship, and a Ragged School is actually worked in common. The St. Giles's Mission is carried on by Dr. Brock's agency,

and Mr. Hatton's work among the street Arabs, emanated from the same source, though now occupying an independent position. Dr. Brock was also one of the first to inaugurate the veritable crusade of preaching in theatres and music-halls. He interested himself greatly in the welfare of the Young Men's Christian Association, and occupied, in the year 1869, the distinguished position of President of the Baptist Union, besides which, he was one of the founders of the London Baptist Association, and became widely known beyond the ranks of his own people as author of the popular 'Life of Havelock.' A distinguishing feature of the Bloomsbury Chapel system was also what was called the midsummer morning Sermon, being a service held at seven o'clock, on the Sunday nearest midsummer day, specially for "young men and maidens," but largely attended by members of his own and kindred congregations. This service was held under Dr. Brock's auspices for twenty years.

It seems strange, then, to begin to speak of such a man in the past tense, while he is still in life and health, but, on the 12th of January last, Dr. Brock read a letter to his congregation, notifying to them that, in consequence of increasing bodily infirmity, he should relinquish his pastorate in September. At a special meeting of the church, on the 26th of

January, resolutions were passed, expressing the sorrow of the congregation at the impending change, and embodying one which has now a melancholy significance, since it spoke in terms of warm commendation of Mrs. Brock, who has recently been removed by death.

Under these combined circumstances, a great gathering might well have been expected to listen to the last two sermons of one who was bound to them by so many ties, and who had attracted around him a large congregation, not so much by profound and eloquent preaching, as by a tone of earnest piety, which extended beyond his pulpit ministrations into all the varied works of Christian charity gathering round Bloomsbury Chapel as their centre.

At the eleven o'clock service every seat in the spacious edifice was filled, a large majority of the congregation being men, and many of them grey-headed men. The service was of a solemn character, prayer, thanksgiving, canticle, and hymn, all bearing more or less directly on the subject of death. When the time for the sermon came, Dr. Brock enunciated as his text the 16th verse of the 71st Psalm, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God," etc., appropriately chosen as having been the portion of Scripture which formed the subject of his first sermon.

Much, he said, as we like to hear about a man whose name we know, still more do we like to know how his plans have answered. He opened this chapel with the text, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God," and he would tell them how that resolution had answered, though a bereaved home and a trembling hand were scarcely the instruments he himself might have chosen for enforcing them. He asked them to bear with his defects, and, when necessary, to take the will for the deed. The entire enterprise was new when he entered upon it, and the wish of the projector and himself was to make the service adapted to the present generation. He had watched the times, and was well acquainted with current literature, so that he knew well what was wanted, while sixteen years at Norwich had also helped him in acquiring that knowledge. Will the plan succeed in my hands? was the question he always asked himself, almost with awe. He had, then, in his wife, a helpmeet for him, but it was still with much hesitation he accepted the charge. Fashionable as it was then to ignore Christ, it had become more so since, and his after experience taught him that his solicitude had not been premature. His work had been no child's play. He had been often nearly overpowered, and had never been so wise a

man as when he adopted the words of the text for his rule of action. His preaching, he said, had ever been plain and open as the trumpet-blast, and largely on the topics of the day. He had not come there as a scholar or a philosopher, but to preach Christ crucified, and the old-fashioned Evangelical doctrine. Leading articles and reviews had borne testimony to the character of his labours, and many living witnesses in all parts of the world, in Canada, Australia, and the far West, as well as in that church, had also testified to it, while some had gone beyond the grave to bear their witness. All had not been success; he had had disappointments, but it was not difficult to see that these had been blessings. The completion of his ministry proved that his adoption of the text was right. He recommended it to every church and to every man. A thousand indications might be seen of the struggle that was coming. Younger men will be put to the test. "May God send you," he said, "a minister who will preach the Gospel, not taking his cue from novelists, dramatists, communists, or moralists, but adhering to the good old path." The sermon was listened to with breathless attention, and many a tearful eye bore witness to the intensity of feeling with which both the words and the circumstances under which they had been spoken were

received. A large portion of the congregation wore mourning, in respect to the memory of Mrs. Brock.

In the evening Dr. Brock preached to a vast congregation from 2 Thessalonians i., ver. 10, "Because our testimony among you was believed." The Lord's Supper was administered to a full chapel, no less than twelve chalices having to be used. The service was not concluded until a late hour, and it was announced that the Rev. T. W. Handford, of Bolton, would occupy the pulpit next Sunday, the report being circulated that he was in trial "for the pastorate."

On the following evening, the special valedictory service was held in the chapel, when a large attendance of ministers took place, and the testimonial, which took the form of an annuity fund, was presented. On the following Thursday morning, Dr. Brock appropriately concluded his very last ministration among his people by a celebration of the Lord's Supper.

THE WALWORTH JUMPERS.

SECT-HUNTING, like misery, makes a man acquainted with strange companions, and familiarises him with strange experiences; but of all the religious phenomena with which I have yet been brought into contact, the latest and certainly the very strangest, have been those connected with the "Jumpers" at Walworth—the Bible Christians, or Children of God, as they prefer to have themselves called.

Acting on "information I had received," I went one Thursday evening, to a certain railway arch in Sutherland Street, Walworth Road, beneath which, in a veritable nineteenth-century church-in-the-catacombs style, I had been given to understand that the Bible Christians gathered thrice a week to listen to the preaching of an inspired woman from Suffolk. There

was no difficulty in finding the place, for before half-past six o'clock a mob had gathered round the rough tarred hoarding which formed the entrance of the sanctuary, and had begun hoarsely to clamour for admission. The doorkeeper, who evidently knew the material with which he had to deal, admitted the claimants slowly, one by one, after close scrutiny. Young Walworth, in the shape of ragged shock-headed boys and draggle-tailed girls, was rigidly excluded, and a section of New Cut swelldom got in only by dint of considerable manœuvring and no little physical persuasion. On the muddy path between the hoarding and the arch, a slight obstacle intervened in the shafts of a waggon drawn up right across the dark and sloppy roadway, on which a few planks were laid, like the Mahometan sword-bridge, for the feet of the faithful. The building was nothing more than an arch of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, roughly boarded in, and lighted with sundry old window-sashes, of which the broken panes too suggestively recalled the missiles of the Walworth Gentiles. A few movable benches and a great many rough planks extemporized into seats, held the place of pews, and the only arrangement approaching the idea of a pulpit, was a carpenter's table at the further end of the edifice, covered with green baize, and

furnished with two coffee-cups and a collecting box. A single gas-pipe ran longitudinally down the archway, whence descended two burners that shed a dim if not exactly a religious light as I entered. The archway was speedily filled with a congregation consisting of fustian-clad men, women in about the proportion of two to one man, and babies in more than adequate force. Broadcloth was slenderly represented, and one portion of it might have been well away, for it consisted of the New Cut swells, who ensconced themselves in a corner, and began to talk loudly and whistle with their hats on. Those New Cut swells had evidently come in for a "lark." In deference, I presume, to something un-Walworth-like in my outer man, I was motioned to a seat near the carpenter's table, among the faithful, who had begun to gather. As they met, the brothers and sisters, or the sisters one among the other, saluted with a kiss of peace; no half-and-half stage salute, but a good whacking kiss that echoed all over the archway, and amused the New Cut swells considerably, for they proceeded at once to imitate the sound, and to remark audibly, "Ain't it nice?"

A little before seven o'clock the "minister" entered —a tall, thin, Suffolk peasant-woman, of middle age, with high check-bones and piercing eyes. She was

accompanied by a young good-looking girl of twenty, and an inane-visaged man in a broadcloth coat and corduroys—a sort of compromise between the chapel and the world. The woman herself was arrayed, unclerically enough, in a red merino gown and somewhat jaunty black bonnet. She had a large prominent mouth with projecting teeth, and the muscles around the jaw bore that peculiar appearance often observed in habitual speakers, being strongly developed, and giving a sort of animal appearance to the lower portion of the face. In a tone which at first struck me as somewhat affected, she requested all those who could not stay until nine to leave at once, as the door would be closed when service began, and no exit allowed afterwards. This arrangement, she explained, was necessary on account of the outsiders, whose noisy clamours for admittance combined with the frequent passage of trains to mar the tranquillity of the evening. The New Cut gentlemen, too, were troublesome all along, but generally got as good as they gave from the minister, who was quite equal to the occasion, and evidently accustomed to interruption. For instance, when the swelldom in the corner said something particularly rude, she observed, "I had heard, among my Suffolk people, of the superior wisdom of the Londoners, but if this be London wisdom

commend me to my Suffolk ignorance." She apologized for the "ill-convenience" of the archway, and then the service began with a prayer by the young girl, who lifted one hand and prayed with fervour and a certain rough but genuine eloquence for ten minutes. She was followed, but not favourably, by the inane man; then succeeded the minister herself, whose prayer was "taller" than the young girl's, but on that account not so eloquent. The girl reminded me forcibly of Dinah in 'Adam Bede.' The woman prayed volubly, and used her long arms freely in gesticulation. Knowing what was to follow, I at first imagined that she was making mesmeric passes, but in this I was probably mistaken. After the box had been sent round, and a revival hymn sung, the sermon began.

Now it must be premised that the distinguishing doctrine of these Children of God is the assurance that they will never die. Belief not only does away with previous sin, but exempts them from bodily death. The Lord is to come speedily and gather them to Himself, without the previous process of dissolution. From the date of their conversion, in fact, they are immortal. They die at conversion, and die no more. With peculiar delight, therefore, did I find the preacher selecting for her subject the 11th chapter of

St. John, which contains the account of the resurrection of Lazarus. She spoke on this congenial topic for considerably more than an hour, but, instead of being content to take the narrative in its simple and beautiful form, she allegorized it in a way that would have astonished Origen himself. Lazarus, for instance, who had been four days dead, typified the people who died before the Mosaic dispensation 4000 years previously. Martha signified the Law, and Mary the Gospel. Speaking of the actual resuscitation, she kept asking "Why did Lazarus come back?" and the New Cut section, who would persist in thinking that every question was addressed personally to them, and demanded an audible reply, suggested that he "had got a return ticket." "No; he never was dead. He had died before," etc. I am free to confess, however, that I should scarcely have gathered the peculiar doctrines of the sect from the sermon, had I not come prepared with some previous knowledge,—so wrapped up was it in far-fetched imagery and aimless "tall" talk. The sermon was fluent, and at times eloquent, but scarcely exciting. There was certainly nothing in it to make one "jump." The preacher went so far as to assert that the brethren had never "given the undertaker a job yet, and didn't mean to." I subsequently inquired the age and numbers of the sect, and found

that it had been in existence seven years, and numbered some two hundred in London. It would be curious to calculate the effect of its wider extension on the present bills of mortality.

During the discourse I had noticed more than one lady subside into an apparently comatose condition, which I could easily have mistaken for natural sleep —for the sermon was long and unexciting—had I not noticed a peculiar twitching of the limbs, and an expression of face like that which I have observed on the features of the mesmerised; in fact, what mesmerisers call "the superior condition." The New Cut gentry were immensely interested when these ladies began to drop off, and were proportionately disappointed when they woke up at the conclusion of the sermon, as though nothing had happened. I confess to feeling disappointed myself when, after a queer, jumpy, John-Brown-Glory-Hallelujah kind of hymn, the meeting was dismissed without any Terpsichorean performance having taken place. However, we were not to be altogether unrewarded for our two hours' sojourn in that damp vault, reeking with the odours of a too nearly adjoining stable. When some of the congregation had left—I think the New Cut swells among the number—two little girls got up and began to dance, much in the same way as they might do if a grinding-

organ had struck up an appropriate air in a quiet street. They were followed by a youth of eighteen or nineteen, who hopped very much like Mr. Stead in the "Perfect Cure." But all three wore that strange vacant countenance so suggestive of animal magnetism, and so difficult—especially for children—to assume. A proud and happy father, dressed like a respectable tradesman, stepped into the centre of the throng gathered round the children, and said, "There, fellow Christians! There's a sight to make you reflect. That is the power of the Holy Ghost." It was, I agreed, a sight to make one reflect; but I could not quite follow the assertion as to its source. I spoke to a respectable woman next me, and learnt from her that every member of this sect, upon conversion, undergoes *death*—an actual process analogous to physical death, and exactly corresponding with it in external signs, only that it is not permanent. "Some die very hard, in great agony," she said; "others quite peacefully." They never "jump" until after they have "died;" that is, as I understand it, they are not liable to these magnetic affections in public, until they have been under the influence. Once under the influence, it may recur at any moment. I acquit the woman of having made mesmeric passes. I told her so, for she anticipated such an explanation,

and disclaimed it. I am also well aware that to explain "jumping" by animal magnetism is very like explaining *obscurum per obscurius;* but I feel convinced that, whatever be the origin of the so-called mesmeric condition, the same is the cause of "jumping." The magnetic "sleep-waking" may be produced without contact or passes—at least, so say its professors—and religious excitement is certainly an adequate cause to produce such an effect. "Once dead, not only will they die no more, but they suffer no pain, they feel no sorrow," said my informant. During the whole of this time, the little girls and the hobbledehoy had gone on dancing; and now a female who had up to this time been sitting still, grimacing and gesticulating in a slightly idiotic manner, jumped up and joined the dance. Her demeanour, however, was anything but happy; she prayed as in an unknown tongue, and called out "The devil! the devil!" I mentioned this fact to the person with whom I was conversing, and she said, "Yes, there is something wrong"—so even the immortals go wrong sometimes—adding, "You see when they are in that state they have the gift of prophecy and clear vision. She can see the state of those around." I felt myself instinctively looking towards the corner the New Cut swells had vacated. Probably —as the spiritists would say—their presence had "dis-

turbed the conditions." When deprecating to me any use of mesmerism or chloroform, the minister said, "I wish I had been able to use the one or the other once or twice to-night," alluding to those incorrigible gentlemen from Lambeth.

I was of course obliged to personate an "anxious inquirer" to the good lady who was my informant. She will see my little *ruse* now, and—I hope—pardon me. I was an "anxious inquirer," though not precisely in her sense of the words. She begged me to come some evening "if the Lord tarried," to an address I will not name, because she gave it to me in confidence; but it is there they have their more private meetings, and where "deaths" are of more frequent occurrence, though they may happen anywhere. The "Children of God," I found, had the Walworth "world" up in arms against them. "Some of the men wait for our brothers," said a decent matron to me, "and almost kill them." Perhaps this is accounted for by the kissing, or, it may be, by the slender accommodation of the railway arch, which necessitates the exclusion of so many. It took two policemen to get us quietly out, and I kept on the *qui vive*, lest some honest Walworthian should mistake me for a "brother."

The "Jumpers" are as old as history—older,

as Niebuhr tells us—in the persons of the Salii, or dancing priests of Mars; and *convulsionnaires* have been common in many ages, and under widely different religious systems. Those beneath the railway arch at Walworth are only the latest, and certainly not the most picturesque or interesting, edition of phenomena rather curious than uncommon.

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JUMPERS OFF THE JUMP.

It is to the credit of our common humanity that eccentricities, whether of religious or of common life, tend to disappear with time. Either they are altogether eliminated; or they hide themselves from public gaze in proportion as cultivation advances. This fact has been curiously illustrated in the case of the Irvingites. In the days of their founder—the celebrated Edward Irving—"miraculous tongues" came suddenly into fashion; and, like Frankenstein, the gifted preacher was unable to lay the monster he had raised. But as years advanced, and the sect grew in social status as well as in numbers, gradually the miraculous tongues fell into silence. On inquiry some years ago at the Irvingite Chapel on Paddington Green, I was informed that the gift of tongues

was vouchsafed on a particular evening in the week, and then only in private—that is, in presence of none but members of the Irvingite persuasion. If any one now pays a visit to the gorgeous cathedral-like building in Gordon Square, he will see nothing but an ultra-ornate service of the most decorous kind, and would no more expect "miraculous tongues," or anything else grotesque, than in Westminster Abbey or the Chapel Royal. What is called "Spiritualism" *par excellence* seems to be passing through the same phase. Dancing tables and locomotive bodies are giving way to trance-mediums and spirit-faces. This is all as it should be, and indicates a growing deference to common sense.

The same satisfactory process is traceable, though in an inferior degree, with regard to that remarkable body whose strange doings it was my lot to observe and chronicle—the Walworth Jumpers. They were, at the time I first saw them, in full swing, or rather "jump," under their uncomfortable railway arch, which became eventually too hot to hold them; and for a time the Jumpers were "lost to sight." After a brief retirement, however, the sect re-emerged into notice, and jumpings were again reported in a certain Little Bethel down a back slum in Chelsea, called College Place. Having reasons for renewing

my acquaintance with the Jumpers, I steered my course for this retired spot, which is situated about midway between the South Kensington and Sloane Square Stations on the Metropolitan District Railway. The principal reason was this: One of the doctrines of this grotesque creed is, that its professors, upon adopting it, became immortal. They "died" at conversion, and that obviated the necessity of any further submission to the "common lot." In fact, that "lot" was no longer "common" in their case. "We number two hundred, and have been in existence seven years without troubling the undertaker or the doctor," were the words used to me by the gaunt Suffolk woman, Mrs. Girling, who is the high priestess of Jumperism. I was informed, however, that this "death" at conversion precisely resembled physical dissolution, and that Jumpers often "died hard." My one desire was then to witness a Jumper's "death," and I was promised facilities for doing so. In the meantime the article on the Walworth Jumpers appeared—and simultaneously the body retired into private life. I never saw my Jumper's "death," and it appears I never shall. Even Jumperism has been paying its unconscious tribute to common sense and decency. It is sitting clothed, if not quite in its right mind, in College Place, Chelsea.

The outward and visible sign of the Jumpers' tabernacle at present is a sweep's broom projecting above the door of the next house, the sooty proprietor of which is accustomed to smoke his pipe at his front gate on evenings when the saints gather, and to indulge in rude remarks as they drive up in their neat phaetons and enter by the jealously-guarded portal of Little Bethel. A fee of threepence is demanded of all non-Jumpers before they are allowed to enter, and the coin is found not only to fill the coffers of the Jumpers in a satisfactory way, but also to be prohibitory so far as regards the "rough" element, who were Mrs. Girling's chief opponents under the railway arch in Walworth. How far the demand of any fee for entrance into a place of public worship is legal, the Chelsea "roughs" do not seem to have inquired. I have sacrificed sixpence on the shrine of Jumperism, having attended the services on two evenings, and the result of my doing so is a conviction that the Jumpers are adapting themselves to the times. "Cotch me a-payin' threepence to see their goings on," was the derisive remark with which the gentleman next door closed our last conversation; and I begin to think the sweep was right. Slowly, but perhaps the more surely, the Jumpers are gravitating towards common sense, and, as their un-

common nonsense was the only previous attraction, it becomes a question whether it is worth while to visit them, unless, indeed, they "lay on" the jumping again.

The chapel in College Place is a cathedral, compared with the Walworth railway arch. It is a tolerably spacious building, well lighted and newly whitewashed. I have come to the conclusion that chapels of this class are generally whitewashed in proportion to the peculiarity of the doctrines preached in them —the whiter the wash the stranger the creed. That of the Jumpers is transparently white, unmodified as yet by any softening tint. The first Wednesday evening was a very quiet evening indeed. Some fifty persons of all classes were present, and on the platform, besides Mrs. Girling and the pretty peasant girl and inane-visaged man who formed the "ministry" at Walworth, there were several other persons, whom I catalogued in my rough notes as follows: Two sensible looking men, two ditto women, one imbecile man, one ditto woman, one hobbledehoy, and three wooden-looking boys. These formed the choir, and sang the hymns very creditably, the pretty Dinah-looking girl leading the melody. Both she and Mrs. Girling wore jaunty hats of the most unecclesiastical character; and in all respects evidence was borne that

the fortunes of the Jumpers had gone up. The kissing which took place between the brethren and sisters as they gathered, and which so provoked the ire of the chaste Walworthians, was more open and undisguised,—every salute ringing through the building with a smart crack, and, sooth to say, there were one or two of the sisters whom others than a Jumper might have been willing to greet. Three benches were placed so as to form an open square in front of the platform, like the orchestra or dancing-place for the chorus in the old Greek Theatre; and here, I was given to understand, the jumping saints practised their devotions. The front seats were, of course, exclusively appropriated to the brethren and sisters. After a hymn "Jesus is here," the inane man of the ancient triumvirate indulged in a sort of patter-prayer, most offensive in its glib-tongued familiarity with sacred names and subjects. Then other hymns were sung, and Mrs. Girling delivered a long rambling sermon, or rather an exposition of 2 Cor. iv. A cobbler, in his shirt-sleeves and leathern apron, was the only opposing element in that evening's proceedings. He commenced operations by singing wrong tunes to the hymns in a shrill falsetto—though that did not matter much, for Dinah easily sang him down; but in the middle of Mrs. Girling's sermon he put an ab-

struse theological question to the preacher, and, not receiving a satisfactory reply, strode off in the most majestic manner, uttering against the saints maledictions which were both loud and deep. When the meeting broke up without any "manifestations," there were some signs of dissatisfaction, and a few requests that money should be returned at the doors. However most of the congregation went, while I and a few others remained. Getting into conversation with Mrs. Girling, who is most graciously accessible, she distinctly repudiated the doctrine of the immortality of the saints, which she explained by saying that Christ was coming immediately, and *therefore* the elect would not die—a position which, as I vainly strove to show her, was common to a dozen sects, and which, it was equally futile to prove, was contrary to the express words of Scripture. "'Twas throwing words away;" and Mrs. Girling had so many more to throw away than myself, that I succumbed, and departed.

The next Wednesday opened in a somewhat more promising manner. After a hymn, "Across the river," (pronounced in an affected way "riva,") Mrs. Girling prayed—actually screaming in a way which I thought must have produced a jump or two. There was a section of hobbledehoy saints, too, in one corner of the orchestra, who seemed to promise well. One

in particular, an unctuous-looking youth of about sixteen, with a mouth from ear to ear, and just the suspicion of an approaching moustache, not only sang the hymns vociferously, with his saintly eyes shut, but kept up a running fire of comment—"So it is," "Hallelujah," and so on—at the more exciting portions of the prayer. Eventually, however, he gave up any proclivities towards Terpsichore, and devoted himself to strong flirtation with the sister next him, whose red fat hand he held in his own during the subsequent discourse. This was again an exposition of a portion of one of the pastoral Epistles, glaringly misinterpreted, and made to mean the most grotesque things. A still more exciting prayer followed, wherein the Almighty was, over and over again, besought to "traverse down" evil. Still not a saintly toe was moved. The orchestra was untenanted as before, and the inane man put out the lights in order to disperse the disappointed congregation—on whom his verbal remonstrance, "Now, friends, the meetin' is closed," had no effect.

Whether my experiences were exceptional, or, whether Jumperism is ceasing to merit its distinctive appellation, I cannot, of course, say. I have given a faithful transcript of my two Wednesday evenings' experiences; since my last visit there may possibly

have been a revival. Inductive philosophy would perhaps demand a further series of experiments; but, for myself, I am not inclined to waste more time or threepences on an exhibition so unedifying as Jumperism without jumping.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIANS.

WHEN religious sects assume as special what is essentially a general name, they must not be surprised to find their adopted garments sometimes hopelessly "too big" for them. Witness the term "Catholic" for instance. If a bewildered Irishman strays into a ritualistic church, and asks the cassocked verger at the door, "Arrah, is this a Cathylick church?" that ecclesiastical attendant replies, as instructed by his superiors, "Yes, this is a Catholic church;" and it is not until after a lengthened explanation that the astonished inquirer learns there are several "Catholic" churches, and that all outside his "Roman branch of the Church Catholic" are not Protestants. So, too, with regard to the term "Bible Christians," which I quoted in a recent paper as assumed by the

sect of the Jumpers. An indignant though courteous correspondent immediately comes forward, and claims the title for a sect having nothing in common with the Jumpers—"A sect," he says, "numbering its hundreds of ministers, and tens of thousands of members, and hundreds of thousands of adherents." The simple fact is that the title is not sectarian at all, and is wrongly assumed by any one religious body. We are all, in so far as we are Christians, Bible Christians—that is, we base our Christianity on the Bible—and no one of us has a right to monopolise the name, though all may share it in common.

With this previous protest, however, against an exclusive right to a common appellation, I am still anxious to do justice to the Bible Christians, as I am to every religious body which I mention. I readily, therefore, put myself in the way of gaining information about them by repairing to the handsome Jubilee Chapel in East Road, City Road. The recent proceedings of the Jumpers have not placed that body in a peculiarly eligible position, and it is therefore only just to draw the line between them and other sects with whom they have little in common. It is true that the Bible Christians derive their origin from the Wesleyan Methodists; one might, in fact, say they are an outlying body of Methodism; and that they are in many

respects akin to a sect of Methodists, whose forms of worship, again, border in some degree on that of the Jumpers, so much so as to have earned for them the uncomplimentary name of "Ranters"; but still there is a line, though perhaps a somewhat ill-defined and vague one, between the two.

The service at Jubilee Chapel, East Road, was simple enough, and certainly embraced no elements calculated to make the most sensitive person "jump" or conduct himself in any way out of the common. It was, in fact, an ordinary Methodist service and sermon, more simple and less exciting than is usually the case. The regular ministers, Messrs. Tremelling and Routh were absent, and their place was supplied by a preacher from Forest Hill, Mr. Isaac B. Vanstone. The service commenced with a not very long extempore prayer, followed by the Lord's Prayer. Then a hymn was sung, "Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire;" the 19th chapter of Acts read as a scripture-lesson, and next came the sermon. Taking as his text 1 Cor. xvi. 9, the preacher commenced with a lengthened panegyric on St. Paul, and stated that the expression "a door" was taken from the races in the circus, where large gates were thrown open to admit the competitors. So, he said, especially in great cities, we all had doors opened to us

for doing good. He dwelt on the wonders of art in old Ephesus; but Paul had no eye for this. He only looked on the vice and crime and confusion of tongues. So, in London of to-day, were there sights to appal us; and here was our "door"—our opportunity for doing good. Dwelling on the epithet "effectual," the preacher said he considered opposition one of the best signs that a cause was good. A man raised from the very dregs of the population (he alluded to Ned Wright) had, a few days since, been set upon and nearly killed because he only said he believed if he died he should go to heaven; and this in a suburban village which boasted of its gentility and knowledge. Passing on to the clause, "And there are many adversaries," he said a better translation would be, "There are many competitors." Religionists, in all ages, had been the chief opponents of Christianity. Christ received the deepest stabs in houses of God. Now, as of old, it was deemed respectable to wear the outward profession of Christianity; but he reminded his hearers of those not so far off, who, like the vagabond Jews in the chapter containing the text, did all they could to bring discredit on religion. He begged to disclaim all connection with these persons. "They are," he said, "the enemies of Christ, and a stigma on the name of Christian. God have mercy on them!"

After a brief allusion to the "false science" of the day, so like that of Ephesus, and the false shame of Christians, which made them fear the sneer of man more than the frown of God, the preacher concluded a sermon which was well adapted to his congregation, but certainly the reverse of sensational. The service was over in less than an hour and a half, and concluded with a hymn and final prayer. Not only were there no violations of good taste in the discourse, but, in one or two points, there was evidence of scholarship, as, for instance, in the description of the circus, and of the Temple of Diana at Ephesus. Nor were these elements out of place. The congregation evidently followed and appreciated those portions of the discourse, which, on looking round, one might have feared would be a little above their comprehension.

In subsequent conversation with the minister, and by reference to the minutes and report of the Conference of 1871, I learnt that the body called the "Bible Christians" seceded from the Methodists some fifty years ago. The cause of secession was that one O'Bryan, who aspired to be an Evangelist, was held ineligible on account of being a family man. The body of Bible Christians is, therefore, historically a standing protest against the celibacy of Evangelists.

Their terms of Church-membership are the same as those of the Wesleyans, with a natural leaning to the side of liberality. The sect originated in East Cornwall, and their numbers are still large in the western counties. They also have missions in Canada, America, and Australia. By carefully elaborated tabular statements, I find the total strength of the body to be over twenty-five thousand, and their number of chapels in the various stations of the home department four hundred and six, realising a revenue for the year of between eleven and twelve thousand pounds. London holds a very insignificant position in point of numbers, possessing under two hundred full members, with only three chapels. The congregation at the Jubilee Chapel was far from large; certainly the building was not half full. The majority of persons seemed to belong to the lower and middle class of tradespeople. The two literary organs of the body are "The Bible Christians' Magazine" and "The Youths' Miscellany."

Although the Bible Christians repudiate the woman whose ministrations at Walworth have lately become notorious, the female ministry is an institution among them, in so far that one Catherine Harris is down in their "Clergy List" as having officiated near Bodmin. In this, as in many other respects, the Bible

Christians have, no doubt, kept pace with the times. For instance, I was specially informed that if I attended the public chapel I should find a "masculine ministry." This, as we have seen, was the case; and the female element is, moreover, represented by the single unit above mentioned—the objectionable term of "superannuated" even standing over against the ecclesiastical lady's name. But, in the earlier records of the society, as gathered from the 'Jubilee Memorial Volume,' it appears that, in former years, female ministrations were much more frequent. Not only was Mrs. O'Bryan, for instance, the original cause of strife, but she herself officiated, as well as her liege lord. No doubt a growing deference to public opinion explains at once the dying out of these irregular ministrations, as also the wider margin that now sunders this body from the Ranters, Jerkers, Jumpers, Rollers, Shakers, *et hoc genus omne.*

In so far, then, as the name of Bible Christian can be appropriated by any one religious sect, it belongs to a peculiarly innocuous and utterly unsensational body of Wesleyans, separated, some fifty years ago, from the main stock by one of those hair-splitting distinctions without a difference that have caused so many offshoots from the parent stem. It is, in fact, a point of discipline rather than of doctrine that

divides them; and, originally, no schism at all seems to have been contemplated by the connubial Evangelist any more than by the Wesleys themselves from the Church of England. There would appear in the half century of this body's existence to have been a disintegrating process at work in almost all religious communities. It is, perhaps, enthusiastic to hope that the obviously different way in which the tide of religious feeling now sets may one day gather the outlying sects of Methodism into one body, and the aggregate body itself into the comprehensive embrace of a National Church. Amid all the confessed difficulties of such a result, there are good and far-seeing men who will not acknowledge it to be impossible, or even improbable. None will doubt that "it is a consummation devoutly to be wished;" and the visit to such an outlying body as the Bible Christians—sober, decorous, and capable of doing great good—makes one regret its comparative isolation, since the result thereof must inevitably be to narrow its range and dwarf its powers of usefulness in a body whose motto is the reverse of the adage, "Divide et impera."

THE SURREY TABERNACLE.

It is inevitable, in religious even more than in secular matters, that every man of mark shall have his imitators, every man of substance his shadow. Failing originality, the next best method is closely to copy a man who is original; and probably in this respect no one, save perhaps Whitfield himself, ever had so large a crowd of followers as Mr. Spurgeon. Even in the Established Church itself, it is quite certain that Mr. Spurgeon's oratory—for he is an orator, *natus* not *factus*—has given its tone to the preaching of a very considerable section not only of Evangelical but Ritualistic clergy; whilst one or two individual preachers could be named, the resemblance of whose style to the Apostle of Newington is something more than a coincidence. But, besides these—it may be

unconscious—imitators, Mr. Spurgeon has a veritable *umbra* or shadow in the person of Mr. James Wells,* who not only belongs to a branch of the same religious body—the Baptist—but has even gone so far as to found a rival Tabernacle on the very outskirts of Mr. Spurgeon's district; a kind of Gerizim compared with Zion, and not altogether dissimilar from the ancient institution in point of religious animosity. For, as "the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans," so do the followers of Mr. Wells regard the followers of Mr. Spurgeon, and *vice versâ*, the disciples of Mr. Spurgeon those of Mr. Wells as what we, from State Church point of view, are compelled to regard both alike—to wit, Unorthodox. Mr. James Wells and his followers belong to that more exclusive branch of the Baptist body termed "Strict Baptists;" the term being applied to them because they rigidly deny communion and Church fellowship to all but members of their own body. In their arguments against the Pædo-Baptists, they insist on the literal rendering of the Greek word Βαπτιζω, and argue that it cannot be made synonymous with mere sprinkling, but of necessity demands immersion; and on this ground they feel justified in excluding from their communion all who do not hold the same views on that which to

* Mr. Wells is since deceased.

an outsider does not seem so very important a question. That this is no overstatement of their case is evident from the following passage in Booth's 'Apology for the Baptists:'

"Why do our brethren censure us as uncharitably rigid and incorrigible bigots? The principal reason appears to be this: they, in general, admit that immersion in the name of the triune God, on a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, is baptism, real baptism; while our fixed and avowed persuasions will not permit us to allow that infant sprinkling, though performed with the greatest solemnity, is worthy of the name. Consequently, though they, consistently with their own principles, may receive us to a communion among them, yet we cannot admit them to fellowship with us at the Lord's table without contradicting our professed sentiments."

It is, then, as the *umbra* of Mr. Spurgeon, and an exponent of the doctrines of this "straitest sect" of the body represented by him, that Mr. James Wells demands a notice here.

The Strict Baptists have pitched their Tabernacle very near indeed to their less exclusive brethren at Newington, namely, in Wansey Street, Walworth Road. Here a very successful imitation—in miniature, of course—of the great Tabernacle, has been erected; and Mr. James Wells, whose origin is a very humble one indeed, is the minister. The congregation, as may be expected from the exclusive test

of Church membership, is by no means so large, even in proportion to the dimensions of the chapel, as Mr. Spurgeon's; but still there was a very fair gathering when I visited it one Sunday morning. Nearly all seemed of the lower middle, or small tradesman class. In fact, Mr. Wells's oratory is scarcely of a style calculated to influence the educated mind, though powerful enough as addressed to those of a different calibre. The service was exactly the same as that which prevails at other dissenting chapels, consisting of a hymn, an exposition of Scripture, a prayer, and a second hymn, forming the prelude to the sermon, which last, of course, according to this theory, forms the staple reason for assembling. The preached word is, so to say, the *pièce de résistance.* The hymns on this occasion were well sung by the whole body of worshippers; the last, which was 'Luther's Hymn,' seeming to call forth all their sympathies, especially in its anticipations of the horrors of the Last Judgment. The exposition, based on Colossians i., was a simple paraphrase calling for no special remark; whilst the prayer, though involving a *copia verborum,* was spasmodic, and the reverse of pleasing to a person not "to the manner born." The text of the sermon was taken from Psalm cii., v. 22: "When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord."

Without perhaps being altogether a typical sermon, it still put forward strongly the Calvinistic principles of the sect, and was delivered in very plain homely English. Passing over the annual gatherings of the Jews at the three great feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, the preacher applied the words to Christians of the present day, and considered, in the customary threefold division—1st, the people; 2nd, their ingathering; 3rd, the object of such ingathering, "to serve the Lord." We must first of all be "regenerate"—that word so prolific in religious strife!—and then we "come into experiences." Even the people of God get low sometimes. They are reborn to a consciousness of destitution. "Ah, that fallen nature! that wicked heart" (I am afraid it ought to be written "*'art*") "of ours!" This was the sentiment that ran, like a refrain, through the whole burden of Mr. Wells's sermon. Then occurred a strange and somewhat complicated metaphor: "As well may a *withered autumnal leaf* attempt to quench the conflagration of the globe as a sinner try to do anything good." Now, the consciousness of this necessity commends us to God. Often these "poor destitute" say, "I can't pray"—forgetting there are prayers which cannot be prayed, or which they do not call prayers. This was aptly illustrated by the simile

of the infant who can only cry, but not articulately express its wants. It needs a mother to find out what that cry signifies. So does God answer these "unprayed prayers." Detailing the different forms of "commendation to God," the preacher would "name a Scripture or two." (α) There was necessity, as in the case of the publican compared with the Pharisee, the blind man, the leper, etc. Then (β) Faith. Everything is possible to him that believes. The sycamore-tree has a deep, strong root; yet a grain of faith uproots it. "I was reading the account of the root of the 'sycamine'-tree the other day, and how deeply it is imbedded in the earth; and then I thought of what Christ said, and *it did me good.*" Then there is (γ) Prayer—even these prayers that can't be prayed. The Christian often doesn't know what he wants. He's an uneasy creature. "What do you want?" says God. "I don't know," replies the Christian; "but God knows." Then, with regard to the ingathering, Christ is the centre of unity. The principle of unity is well set forth in the couplet: "When nothing in themselves they see, but Christ is all in all." Martyrs have weighed flames against an apostatising conscience, yet never wavered. "I have proved this too," said Mr. Wells, "in the forty years that have

gone by since I stammered out my first discourse, and am still where I then was, in God's truth; and the mere book-read minister, the mere man-made pastor, is not the man to find out the righteous for this ingathering." Having "named a great many Scriptures" in illustration of this point, he added—and it seemed to me an instance of preaching down to a congregation rather than leading a congregation up to the preacher—"The sheep of Bozrah make a great noise. Now, the world can't endure that the people of God should make a noise. We haven't half enough noise among Free Grace Preachers. We hope to make a good deal more noise yet." Again, Israel passed out of Egypt by means of the Paschal Lamb. "And that's the gate, sir," added Mr. Wells, addressing nobody in particular, of course, but reminding one very forcibly of the way the little boys cry out the papers at a railway station, though apostrophising nobody of the male sex individually. "You'll pass out of trouble, sir, and by-and-by pass out of the world by this Paschal Lamb." Then, lastly, "You'll say you haven't got through your text yet. Well, it's as much as I have; but I do like dwelling on these experiences." To serve the Lord was the object of this ingathering of the Jews at the annual festivals. It is important to serve God with

gladness. "If you want to get away from God's service, depend upon it you will one of these days." Thence, as to an anti-climax, the sermon passed into a demand for the "usual quarterly collection." Thanks to the liberality of the congregation, there was not much need existing, but still he begged them to give something, "just by way of amusement."

Now, here was a sermon occupying an hour in delivery, fluently enunciated without notes, and eagerly listened to by a large congregation, who certainly would not have appreciated the most polished preacher reading a model composition from MS. There was, moreover, a shorthand reporter taking down the discourse verbatim, which is published on the Wednesday succeeding its delivery, and sold for one penny; and so the simple pastor's thoughts become literally "household words" amongst his flock. I saw them liberally investing their pennies in the purchase of these sermons at the Tabernacle door; and one poor man who did so looked up at me as I passed, and almost smacked his lips as he said, "Eh, he *was* good this mornin,' wasn't he?" I cordially endorsed his opinion; for I could not help thinking as I passed along the slums of Lambeth that it is thus—though in a form I may not altogether like—great ideas get instilled and infiltrated into the minds

of the masses. Better than loafing in the New Cut that my simple friend should have spent his time and his penny at Mr. Wells's Tabernacle, even though it be true, as some tell us, that if Mr. Wells is the shadow of Spurgeon, Spurgeon is the shadow of Whitfield. Better, I repeat, even though our preacher of this morning shall, under such a view, have been only that most attenuated of all things, the "shadow of a shade." It is not eloquence of a very high order, perhaps; but still it is far better than the spurious eloquence of the infidel or pseudo-patriot; as we may see in the following passage extracted from the published sermon of Mr. Wells, for which I saw my poor friend part with his evidently hard-earned penny. The sermon is entitled 'The Good Shepherd's Voice:'

"Perhaps I have more confused you than not in branching out upon this part; but I am very fond of going from part to part in the mediation of Christ. I do not find the grass so sweet anywhere as it is there; I do not find the still waters rise anywhere as they do there; I do not get so much honey and oil out of the rock anywhere as I do there; I do not get so much boldness to live and die anywhere as I do there; I do not see so much of God anywhere as I do there; I do not see my sins and lose my fear of them anywhere as I do there; and I do not lose my troubles and rebellions anywhere as I do there. There I am satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and am ready to say,—

'My willing soul would stay
In such a scene as this;
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss.'

"What a wonderful voice? It may well be said that 'never man spake like this man.' Who could ingather our souls as He has done? Who could have such a voice for us as He has by Calvary's wondrous cross? There is every endearment there."

THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS.

AMONGST other generalisings into which I have been led in my study of numerous outlying bodies of Christians, one very noticeable has been a sort of reticence —which I am unwilling to dignify with the title of modesty—on the part of a few sects. This feature has been most apparent where the tenets or practice of the body in question run violently counter to common sense or the ordinary observances of intelligent people. In the large majority of cases, I have supplemented the knowledge gained from observation with that afforded me by members of the sect I am describing. Sometimes—as, for instance, in the cases of such unknown bodies as the Sandemanians and the Christadelphians—I have incorporated into my narrative the actual words supplied by courteous and

intelligent professors of their tenets. In fact, there have been only three instances where information has been refused or withholden. The Irvingites and Positivists declined to supply such particulars as I sought, on the expressed and perfectly intelligible grounds that they did not wish for publicity. The Particular Baptists, in the person of a leading man in their ranks, simply did not accord me the courtesy of an answer to my letter. It may be inferred, perhaps, that this silence was due to a wish to remain in obscurity; yet such can scarcely be the case, since the very gentleman to whom I allude advertises in a halfpenny local paper every week as follows:

"NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISTS. — This ancient section of the visible Church being much misunderstood, it is believed to be right to announce that the principles and practical efforts of Particular Baptists are more fully represented in the monthly issues of 'The Earthen Vessel and Christian Record' than by any other publication in existence. 'The Earthen Vessel' has been edited for 27 years by Charles Waters Banks, the present Minister of Johnson Street Chapel, Notting Hill."

I have therefore been driven back in this case upon my original method, which, it may be remembered, was simply to visit each several place of worship, and faithfully to record what I saw and heard. The fact that inferences so formed might occasionally do in-

justice to particular bodies of Christian people, led me to supplement such observation with personal inquiry. In this instance, if I fall into such error, the fault will rest not with me, but with those who refused the ordinary civility of a reply. Johnson Street Chapel and "The Earthen Vessel" form the only data for my observations. The recent deaths of two of the greater lights in the Strict Baptist Communion—Mr. John Forman and Mr. James Wells—seemed to render some notice of the sect opportune at the moment; else I might have been tempted to devote a little more time to unearthing this somewhat retiring body of religionists. As it is, I must plead guilty to committing my crude ideas to paper after two visits to Mr. Banks's chapel at Notting Hill, and the perusal of a number of that singularly titled periodical, "The Earthen Vessel," to the contents of which I shall venture to direct critical attention by-and-by.

Johnson Street is a dingy, ill-favoured slum turning south out of High Street, Notting Hill, near the site of the former turnpike-gate, which still gives its traditional name to the spot as well as to the adjacent station of the Metropolitan Railway. At the corner of Johnson Street gather on a Sunday evening knots of those nondescript animals that are neither boys nor young men—neither gentle nor "rough,"—but

described under the wide category of "cads," making night hideous with their vile language, viler cigars, and vilest gallantries to the young ladies who also congregate in that locality. The Particular Baptist Chapel situated, with such surroundings, in Johnson Street, is a low, beetle-browed edifice, bearing on its front the outward and visible signs of the strictest sect of Calvinism, as though one should have written thereupon the stern motto, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." The porch and pillars of the edifice are much placarded with printed notices of "The Earthen Vessel"—the periodical publication I have mentioned as devoted to the interests of the sect, and edited by the pastor of the Johnson Street congregation; who, by the way, strict as his principles may be, does not hesitate to forget his Sabbatarianism, so far as concerns vending the current number of "The Earthen Vessel" among the faithful gathered for their Sunday devotions. An official undertakes the *colportage* from pew to pew, and the waiting congregation invest their pence in the "organ" with the grim air of doing something necessary to salvation.

On neither occasion when I visited Johnson Street Chapel could I say that there was anything very distinctive in the service or sermon. There was a good deal of handshaking and general conversation going

on, contemporaneously with the trading in "Earthen Vessels," before the commencement of the service. Then a hymn was sung, after being conscientiously read through, to the familiar tune of "French," announced by a gentleman in the gallery. During the hymn a practical door at the back of the pulpit opened in quite a sensational manner, and Mr. Banks glided into the rostrum. He read 1 Kings xvii. without comment, and then uttered a long extempore prayer of that class which, it always strikes the hearer, would do equally well for a sermon; nay, is, in many respects, a preliminary sermon in disguise. Then another hymn was sung; the Jack-in-the-box-like gentleman in the gallery again getting up and shouting out, it seemed almost incoherently, "Bloomsbury!"—which again referred to the tune. Then came the sermon, which, from some physical defects, fatal to oratory, it was not easy to hear, though Mr. Banks did not spare himself. The text was taken from 2 Kings, chap. ii. ver. 12: "And he saw him no more." It was divided in the staple threefold fashion, touching separately: 1. On the fact that Elijah was taken up. 2. That Elisha saw him taken up. 3. That he then saw him no more.

In days before books, the preacher said, God amongst other methods, taught by men's names.

Elijah formed a pretty long chapter in such teaching. He sprang up all at once; and the scenes of his life were typical of Christ. He went to the widow of Sarepta, who had a little óil and a little meal—that is, she had only a little of God's spirit. She was a type of the Church. God sends his son to the starving. Elijah was the true prophet, when many false ones were in the world. "I don't say we have many false prophets in our day," said the preacher, warming up to a climax; "but there are some. They shall be put down as Elijah put down the prophets of Baal. I would to God these false prophets had no false fire. Man can't always distinguish false fire." Here the mention of the priests of Baal beguiled the preacher into a long and highly allegorical adaptation of the sacrifice to modern times. The altar was Christ's humanity. The dust, stones, water around it were our sins. The fire came down and took them away. "Just so the fire has taken damnation and death from all Christians. All frailty is taken *clean away!*" "I remember well," continued the preacher, waxing personal as he progressed, "when God came and raised me up. The whirlwind had come and knocked me down. Elijah was taken; but should no one follow him with healing power? Gospel ordinances may be all very well, so may well-tuned har-

monies; but all are of no avail without *salt.*" (I confess myself utterly lost amidst the imagery of this passage, and can but quote mechanically.) "If a man can change his religion once, he can do it any number of times; but God's people are *glued* to him!" From these few extracts, it will readily be gathered that the style of Mr. Banks's pulpit oratory is somewhat colloquial. Indeed no more perfect example of the homely style could, perhaps, be adduced than the closing sentences of his protracted discourse: "Where do you live now? Why, a Christian man is living *in lodgings.* His 'ome is in 'eaven."

There may be, let us confess, better things in a sermon than literary merit or eloquence; and one could not hear the preacher at Johnson Street Chapel without feeling sure that he was sincere, and conscientiously believed his Calvinistic creed. Of Mr. Banks, as editor with twenty-seven years' experience, one cannot speak so leniently. Of course "The Earthen Vessel" is not exactly the kind of periodical which a casual reader would take up for an hour's light amusement. Nearly the whole of the number I consulted is occupied with prose and poetical notices of Mr. Forman; but I regret exceedingly to say that Mr. Banks allows his correspondents to talk in more than one passage of "stirling" faith, and to say that

"Mr. R. L. still *lays* in affliction." The verbiage of the sect, too, is prominent. Such and such a congregation has *come out* on the principles of free grace and strict communion; whilst the writer of a letter subscribes himself "Yours, *in covenant* love," and Brother Flory, at Cheltenham, holds a short afternoon service, "which *are* often useful to those who cannot get out morning or evening."

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIANS.

THE recent occurrence of the Presbyterian Tercentenary celebration naturally turned the thoughts of an erratic church-goer in the direction of a body which has so many associations, historical as well as theological, to recommend it to notice; though I candidly confess to having set out on my Sunday peregrinations, for once, without much in the way of chart or compass, save in so far that I determined to visit a Presbyterian place of worship, under the idea that I should hear something of the celebration that had been taking place during the previous week. Now—as I have had to remark more than once before, in reference to other religious bodies—one of the earliest discoveries made in the study of Nonconformity is the amazingly prolific character of the subject.

Grouped under such a general head as Presbyterianism, for instance, are several subdivisions; and, as fate determined, it was to one of the less known branches I unintentionally drifted, instead of carrying out my original purpose of visiting some representative of what is usually considered the main body. Through a misdirection I failed to reach the church of Dr. Donald Fraser, whom I had intended, as far as I had definite intentions at all, to make my representative man of English Presbyterianism; and, instead of reaching my destination, I found myself in the church of St. Paul's, Westbourne Grove, a place of worship belonging not to the English Presbyterian Church formally so named, but to the body called the United Presbyterians—it might seem almost on the *lucus a non* principle, seeing they are not united with the parent stem. I believe, however, the name was given on account of their uniting into one several different offshoots which had from time to time separated themselves from the main trunk of Presbyterianism.

St. Paul's Church, Westbourne Grove, is a handsome Gothic building, and both internally and externally somewhat out of keeping with what one has, rightly or wrongly, been accustomed to consider the genius of Presbyterianism. I confess to having made

up my mind to "undergo" a Sunday morning service at one of these churches as a not very pleasurable ordeal. I must acknowledge myself agreeably surprised in my experiences at St. Paul's, which present themselves to my mind as a new endorsement of the principle that one should not judge any religious body beforehand or on hearsay—the very obvious deduction and moral of those studies in which I have been now for so long a time engaged. The congregation was not large by any means—in fact, there was but a sprinkling of people in the pews; but then it was raining pitilessly outside, and, moreover, the minister, the Rev. Walter Morison, B.A., is comparatively new, having only about a year since come from Glasgow to succeed the Rev. Dr. King, now of Edinburgh. What surprised me very much more than the thinness of the congregation was to hear an excellent choir, singing, as I entered, to the accompaniment of an equally excellent organ, not the old-fashioned unrhymed version of the Psalms which I had expected, but a hymn from a metrical collection. The old rugged Presbyterian Psalter was, indeed, bound up with these hymns; but little of it was used during the service at St. Paul's. The form of worship, indeed, was the very reverse of *triste*. There was a brightness and cheeriness about it for

which, I fancy, few outsiders would have been prepared. After the preliminary hymn, the minister, a middle-aged, bearded gentleman, with just enough of the north-country accent to give a Scottish flavour to his ministrations, read from the pulpit the 104th Psalm, which was followed by what was quaintly enough called "The Te Deum Chant." It was, in fact, the old Ambrosian Te Deum sung to an Anglican chant, modulating into the minor at the proper place, and then back again to the major towards the conclusion, just as is now the custom in the Church of England. In fact, as far as musical performance went, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church was something more than on a par with the average of London churches. The "Te Deum" was followed by a second lesson from the New Testament, for which Mr. Morison selected St. Matthew vi., 24 to the end —being that portion of the Sermon on the Mount where the Great Master schooled men in God's providence from the object lessons of the birds and the flowers. This selection afforded a good illustration of the advantage to be derived from a discretionary power being vested in the minister as regards the choice of Scripture lessons—a principle already in a measure adopted in the new Lectionary of the Church of England by the arrangement of alter-

native lessons for the Third Sunday service, the Second lesson being, in such case, left absolutely to the discretion of the reader. In this instance the noble sketch of God's care in Nature in the 104th Psalm worked up to the lessons of Divine Providence in the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount; and this again dovetailed with the subject of the sermon —a symmetry which could have resulted from no fortuitous juxtaposition of Scripture lessons, however individually appropriate. The Second Lesson was followed by a rather long and very fervent extempore prayer, and then a portion of the same 104th Psalm—metrical version—was sung. The Lord's Prayer followed, ending the simple and therefore effective service; after which, without leaving the pulpit, Mr. Morison commenced his sermon. I should have mentioned that he wore during the whole service the ordinary preacher's gown and large Geneva bands, rather forensic than ecclesiastical in their dimensions.

The text was taken from the second chapter of the Song of Solomon, verses 10, 11, and 12: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our

land." In the spiritual reading of this Canticle, the preacher said, the Bridegroom is Christ, and the Bride the Church. Spring may be taken to represent any period in history when Christ leads forth the Church with joy. Such a period under the Old Dispensation was the return of the Jews from captivity. Such, too, were the Gospel era and Pentecost; such the Reformation in Europe; such the Revival of Missions and other times of refreshing, both in America and our own land. The Church literally hears the voice of Christ. Now, however, in the actual springtide God is writing this text in letters of flowers, and speaking it in the song of the birds. Let us, he said, learn the lessons deducible therefrom. 1. That God's scheme is not one of bare utilitarianism. We take, he urged, too narrow a view of that word "useful." It applies not only to what is materially useful, it may apply to a poem, a picture, or a grand composition in music. Look out, and see what kind of a world God has made. It is not a mere granary or workshop. See written in the blue sky, the green earth, the gleaming sea, the fact that beauty is an attribute of God. A broader piety will result from recognizing this fact. 2. Spring tells us of the goodness and love of God. The world, as a whole, is made for happiness. It is

not a prison, but a home. The beautiful is everywhere mingled with the useful. And yet it is not that God is not just. Gather the rose carelessly, and you find the thorn; grasp at the water-lily, and you will drown. So in the moral world. Break its laws, and you suffer. The flowers are no heretical preachers, but most evangelical in this respect. 3. Spring teaches God's care in providence. The poor man goes out from the city and sits him down on a primrose bank, where the birds are singing above him. God speaks to him there, though not by a minister or a Bible. The primrose says to him, "If your God is the same as mine, will He not care for you as well as me?" The bird's voice becomes articulate, and says the same. It was the very lesson that was taught to the fainting heart of the traveller Bruce, when he was seemingly lost in the wilderness. A single tiny flower told him of God's care, and inspired fresh effort. 4. God is faithful to His promise. The "time" of the singing of birds is come. To everything there is a time. God's providence is an intelligent oversight. 5. After sorrow comes joy. Spring succeeds winter. So in reaction after trials, in recovery from sickness, in alleviation after bereavement. So, also, in spiritual things is there what may be likened to the clear

shining after rain. After the sense of sin comes the feeling of acceptance. There comes new life. Every backsliding is a relapse into winter; every reacceptance a renewal of spring. And, lastly, the Christian's death, happy and beautiful, repeats the initiatory words of the text, "Rise up, my love, my fair one; come away," etc. The special lesson, carefully deduced, was that we should be ready at God's call to go forth to any state of experience to which he summons us. Such are the merest outlines of a sermon which, it will be at once apparent, was the very reverse of dry or didactic. Some might even have objected that it was florid, but it was certainly in keeping with the church where it was delivered and the religious exercises by which it was preceded. The whole service, which lasted only from eleven to half-past twelve, ended with a brief extempore prayer and the Apostolic Benediction. Mr. Morison had no assistance, conducting a morning and evening service, with sermon at each, entirely by himself.

I am indebted to the courtesy of the minister of St. Paul's for supplementing my imperfect observations with definite and authentic information. The congregation is distinguished by being one of a few Presbyterian bodies which have adopted the aid of

instrumental music in worship,—the Synod which governs the churches of this body. The United Presbyterian denomination has, he tells me, five hundred congregations in Scotland, and upwards of a hundred in England, some ten or a dozen of these being in London or the neighbourhood. The body is Evangelical in doctrine; and, as respects Church government, does not favour the theory of establishments; in this respect differing somewhat from the Free Church in Scotland, and the English Presbyterian Church. Negotiations for union, however, between the denominations are at present going on, and are not unlikely to be successful. The sentiment was strongly expressed in connection with the Tercentenary Celebration, in which some of the United Presbyterians took part, that a divided Presbyterianism was an unworthy state of things after the lapse of 300 years. It was thought that the condition of Presbyterianism in the time of Elizabeth and for a while afterwards, showed it not to be an exotic in English soil.

With regard to the claim of Presbyterianism to be the parent of British Nonconformity, it may not be uninteresting to quote a few words from a series of papers which appeared some years ago in a High-Church magazine, called "The Old Church Porch,"

edited by the Rev. W. J. E. Bennett, of Frome. The animus of the papers would be inferred from the source, as also from the title under which they have been republished, "The Church's Broken Unity." This, however, is not to the purpose. The facts are more important than the deductions. It is in these terms allusion is made to the subject of my present paper, "When I gave you a list of the Separatists who surround and mutilate the Church of our Blessed Redeemer, I placed at the head of them the Presbyterians; and I think I rightly placed them there, because the tenets which they hold are the source and fountain from which every other separation has flowed. Presbyterianism is the womb out of which has issued from time to time that innumerable progeny of modern unbelief, scepticism, heresy, schism, and separation which has injured and threatens to destroy the Church of Christ." These are bitter words, and, as such, would be out of place here, except as enabling us to place Presbyterianism on its proper pedestal as—what I have ventured to term it, and this quotation endorses it—the parent of British Nonconformity; some would of course, say the parent of free thought and private judgment in Britain. As such—whether in the way of approval or disapproval, and we express neither here—we cannot neglect it.

The Tercentenary Celebration has, indeed, come and gone, with a perhaps, ominous quietude; but it set me thinking, and doubtless set others as well; and may not impossibly have the effect of lending an interest beyond its own to this brief account of one of the later developments of the oldest branch of Nonconformity in Great Britain.

The United Presbyterian Church has a considerable number of missionaries in the West India Islands, and in Old Calabar, Caffraria, India, and China. It raised for all purposes during the year 1871, the sum of £325,176, this being somewhat over its ordinary income, which is contributed entirely in a voluntary way by the people.

Among the more literary names of the ministers and members of the denomination at the present hour may be mentioned:—Dr. John Brown, author of "Rab and His Friends," in "Horæ Subsecivæ," son of Dr. John Brown, the commentator, and great-grandson of John Brown, of Haddington, a true "Scotch worthy;" George Gilfillan, of Dundee, the critic; Dr. Cairns, of Berwick; Professor Calderwood, of Edinburgh University; and Dr. Eadie, a member of the New Testament Revision Committee, and well known for his exegetical writings.

THE CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

Of all the religious phenomena of the present generation, the strangest, if not in its original idea, certainly in its subsequent developments, is that presented by "Irvingism," as it is still called by outsiders, or the "Catholic and Apostolic Church," as, with some apparent ambition, it is designated by its own adherents. The name, indeed, in its transition from the title of an individual Presbyterian minister to the pretentious appellation of *the* Church Catholic and Apostolic, fairly enough embodies the varying fortunes of this remarkable religious body. Emerging, in the year 1830, from the unlikeliest of all religious bodies to give birth to such a system as we now see it, Irvingism seemed at first to promise nothing more than another "Church" of Presbyterianism,

with a very strong rationalistic tinge as its distinguishing mark; since, be it remembered, the doctrine which caused the doors of the church in Regent Square to be closed on the Rev. Edward Irving, once its Apollos and its pride, was not one that is now found among the tenets of the Catholic and Apostolic Church. It was, in fact, that of the peccability of Christ's nature; whereas, on the subject of the Incarnation, no sect can possibly be more orthodox than the Irvingite. The distinguishing marks of this body are: (1) the revival of the Apostolate, dormant since the death of St. John, with the restoration of the fourfold ministry as a necessity of Church organization, and (2) the recognition of prophecy as a present mode of communicating the directions of God's Spirit to man. Concede this second position, and not only the former may follow, but any amount of "development," greater even than that which has metamorphosed the dim conventicle in Newman Street into the cathedral-like edifice in Gordon Square, may be expected. For instance, entering the latter church a little while ago, on a week-day, I was considerably surprised to see what I at first, in my innocence, took for two drinking-fountains, but which proved to be receptacles for holy water at the entrance, just as in a Catholic church. I asked the

ıttendant about it, and he informed me this had been the last direction given by the voice of prophecy.

The list of the Apostolate, restored by the prophetic call in 1832, to its original number of twelve, has now dwindled to three. No provision, I find, has been made for filling up the broken ranks; many of the adherents of this body, I fancy, tacitly believing that the failure of the apostolic office will be but to herald the closing in of the existing dispensation. At present, however, this body, though not numerous, is in full vigour, and working, as far as possible, with the exact organization prescribed in apostolic times. At the last census, I find, from one of their publications, they were outnumbered, even by the Mormons in England, so that their supposed perfection of organization does not guarantee ther anything like an apostolic amount of expansion. I fact, as I gather, they scarcely look or wish for th Though protesting against being sectarian, they s stand aloof, believing (and is not this of the esse of sectarianism?) that they will be the "first fru to be gathered in at the Second Advent. So the not a proselytizing body. They recognize the A can, Roman, and Greek orders, and regard Pro Dissent as "an extension of the Diaconate." beautiful Sacrarium of the Gordon Square

there is a tablet bearing the expression "Pro Ecclesiis Anglicanis," the plural number being significant.

There are seven churches in London, and in every one a double daily service at 6 A.M. and 5 P.M. The principle is, that the first and last hours of the day should be sanctified by prayer and praise. The service is ornate in the extreme, and contains elements of Judaism, Anglicanism, Romanism, and the Greek ritual. At a week-day evening service that I attended in the church on Paddington Green, there were fourteen persons officiating, or rather in vestments, whilst the members of the congregation only amounted to twenty. The "Angel" or Head of the church was habited in a rich purple cope, incense was burnt, the "Sacrament" (which had been, of course, "reserved") was "exposed," almost as at Catholic "Benediction," and there were prayers for the dead. In fact, the general tone of the worship was far "higher" than that of the most advanced Ritualistic churches. And this is the daughter of John Knox's severe Scotch system.

To witness, however, the full development of this *cultus*, one must visit Gordon Square at ten o'clock on Sunday morning. There is a short "forenoon service," lasting about half an hour, and answering to the description given above, except that, instead of

fourteen, there are nearly fifty clergy in different vestments, and the ritual is altogether of a more florid character. After this comes the "Eucharistic Service," which is complicated and ornate as the Roman mass, though couched, it is true, in the vernacular, but making the sad mistake of wearisome length. The service, commencing at ten, and proceeding without pause, is not over until nearly one. The sacrificial vestments, on the occasion of my visit, were of white satin, with gold adornments; the "Angel," as celebrant, wearing the cope. There were people in black tippets, and people in puce tippets, and people in short surplices, with coloured stoles (irreverently termed "ribbons" by the present Archbishop of Canterbury) sometimes over one shoulder, sometimes over both, all very picturesque and incomprehensible. There were others in a simple white dress, girt in with a cord at the waist. The effect was imposing; but one could not help feeling that all this, in a Romish church, or even an English cathedral, comes with some sort of sanction, at all events on the score of antiquity. It is intolerable as revived in Ritualism, almost more so when it comes with—as far as outsiders can see—no sanction at all. Concede the prophetic utterance, and, as I have said, every detail has a meaning. But, failing this, it is

simply the old fable of the world on the back of the elephant, the elephant on the back of the tortoise, and the tortoise standing on nothing at all.

As a musical performance the Eucharistic service at Gordon Square is decidedly above par. The old and venerable-looking gentleman who performs the office of celebrant during two whole hours in that vast building must be blest with the lungs of a Stentor. The rendering of the "Preface," in the monotonous cadence peculiar to ecclesiastical music, and then the burst of music from the choir in the "Trisagion," are very effective indeed. The "Agnus Dei" was also very sweet; but it struck me that the music chosen for the different parts of the service was as eclectic as the system itself, and this made the *tout ensemble* a little patchy. Though not called by the special name, there were virtually half-a-dozen anthems, and I know not how many repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, during the long morning service. So, then, our frequent repetitions in the Church of England service need not be a sign of unspirituality after all. A "Homily" preceded the Nicene Creed, and was true to its name. There was no pretence of preaching power; in fact, there was rather evident the studious avoidance of all rhetorical display. The subject was the allegory of the Sower, which formed the Gospel for the day here as in the Established Church.

In fact, the resemblance throughout the service to that of the Church of England was so strong, as to force on one the question,—Why the separation? Why, in any case, the separate ritual? It seems really almost a distinction without a difference, a needless breaking of unity. Of course the reply is that the organization of the Established Church, adequate as far as it goes, is defective. A "testimony" was, in fact, circulated some years ago to the bishops and clergy of the Church of England, requesting their attention to the fact that episcopacy did not involve apostolical succession; but the evidence did not appear convincing, though the Irvingites boast, and, I believe, not without truth, that some of the Church of England clergy hold Irvingite doctrines, whilst ministering in the Establishment. If it be so, we do not grudge them their converts. Probably in allusion to this unapostolic character of the very large majority of Christendom, I find a special prayer in the Eucharistic Office "for the low estate of the Church." At the same time an evident effort after comprehensiveness is made in a note appended to the Nicene Creed. "This creed," it says, "is printed as it was left at the Council of Constantinople." With reference to the "Filioque" clause, "One branch of the Church Catholic affirms on this point, whilst the

other declines to affirm ;" and the matter is therefore declared to be an open one, "until some competent authority pronounce upon it."

There is one question which cannot, at this particular moment, fail to connect itself with those prophetic utterances on which rests the whole fabric of the Catholic Apostolic Church, and that is the connection of those utterances with, or their difference from, the modern so-called "spiritual" manifestations. I mooted the question to the attendant at Gordon Square, who quite conceded the point that these "spirit voices" are spiritual; but he said, "They are the work of evil spirits." Then, however, occurs the very important question, how to discriminate between them? I myself can distinctly recollect the prophetic utterances which used to take place in Newman Street, and other Irvingite places of worship, some thirty years ago. I have also visited every trance medium, and producer of the "spirit voice," amongst modern spiritists, and I fail to trace any difference. I am aware, of course, that a doctrinal test is proposed to "try the spirits," but I am equally aware that this test is only allowed by a fraction of one party. The two manifestations have in common the peculiar feature of "unknown tongues." I was present the other evening at an exhibition of

the kind in a spirit circle, and the whole thing appeared to me a piece of clever acting; but an eminent naturalist who was present, and who is deeply versed in savage dialects, gave it as his decided opinion that the words uttered by this medium were *not* nonsense words. Now, how, I ask, is one to discriminate between these manifestations and the prophetic utterances on which the whole structure is built up, of which the Gordon Square Cathedral is the apex and embodiment? Furthermore, one of their own body, who for a long time exercised the prophetical office, has written 'A narrative of facts characterising the supernatural manifestations in members of Mr. Irving's congregation, and other individuals in England and Scotland, and formerly in the writer himself.' The book, which reached a second edition, but is now out of print, contains an elaborate series of facts, which convinced the writer, Mr. Baxter, evidently a sincere and intelligent man, that the power which had wrought upon him was not Divine, but diabolical. Those who concede the facts of modern spiritualism, and do not attribute them merely to imposture or enthusiasm, in very many instances assign to them a similar origin. This is, to a great extent, the attitude assumed by the clerical, as opposed to the scientific mind. The great *desideratum*

for the Catholic Apostolic Church, then, is some criterion that shall enable, not so much the initiated, as the public at large, to distinguish between those prophetic claims, on which their Apostolate and Church are built up, and the utterances of those individuals who come to us with claims almost identical, but whom all, save a very few enthusiasts, divide into the two simple categories of deceivers and deceived—speakers either of their own ideas only, or of ideas derived from a source very different from what any Church would care to acknowledge as its basis.

Probably as the latest outgrowth of the endlessly varying religious instinct in man, and, still more, as a wonderful and consummate systematising of elements that seem at first sight to involve nothing but disorder, the scheme of which the Church in Gordon Square stands as temple and type is well worth the attention of the religious philosopher in this nineteenth century.

THE NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH.

"THERE is no God but our God, and somebody or other is His Prophet," is the keynote of every new religion from Mahomet to Joanna Southcott. Either as the discoverer of a new system of Church organization, or as possessing special individual illumination—or both—the *soi-disant* prophet comes before us claiming our notice for the "last new thing in churches." Often the novelty is veiled under a specious return to primitive antiquity; but in the case of the New Jerusalem Church, popularly known as Swedenborgianism, such a pretence is not made. In fact, "The New Church" is the title assumed by its adherents as a recommendation and claim to acceptance.

They eschew, they say, the name Swedenborgian

as savouring of the idea that their principles are founded on the assertions of Swedenborg; whereas they insist that he was but the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ to reveal afresh old truths which had been perverted by human traditions, and new truths which should complete the glorious edifice of Christ's Church, and which men were too coarse and corrupt to receive in darker days. These truths, which they receive, as they say, on the authority of the Bible, and from their accordance with sound reason, they allege as their foundations of thought, and not any *ipse dixit* of Swedenborg. Hence they prefer to be called "The New Church;" or, as they believe this system to be the fulfilment of what is said in the Apocalypse of the New Jerusalem, "The New Jerusalem Church." There are about one hundred congregations in Great Britain, and a much larger number in the United States.

Although the recent publication of White's 'Life of Swedenborg' has made many persons familiar with the personal history and pretensions of the Swedish seer, it may still be well to recapitulate a few leading facts before narrating my visit to a Swedenborgian place of worship, principally for the reason that the worship itself really gives very little indication of the opinions held by the worshippers. The ritual

resembles that of the Church of England, even more closely than is the case with the Irvingite *cultus.* We are told, too, with reference to the Swedenborgians, as the Irvingites, that many clergymen hold the doctrines of the sect whilst retaining their position in the Established Church. In fact, one of the most recent apologies is that written by the Rev. Augustus Clissold, M.A., described in "Crockford" as of Stoke Newington, London, ordained deacon and priest by the Bishop of Salisbury in 1823; whilst another clergyman—whom, perhaps, it would be invidious to mention—attached as curate to one of our most important Metropolitan churches, makes no secret of his adoption of Swedenborg's views, and has, in fact, lately published some sermons preached in the parish church, which are deeply tinctured with the views of the Scandinavian prophet.

Swedenborg was born at Stockholm in the year of the English Revolution, 1688, and, unlike Edward Irving, who was the visionary *pur et simple,* he combined with the enthusiasm of the mystic the practical intelligence of the philosopher. He occupied the position of Assessor to the Royal Metallic College, or School of Mines, under Charles XII., a position that would seem somewhat antagonistic to the development of fanatical views in religion. That the

wisdom of the philosopher may coalesce with religious eccentricity, however, has been recently proved to us from the fact that Professor Faraday belonged to the sect of the Sandemanians or Glassites; a body scarcely recognizable from their insignificance, even in the records of Unorthodox London.

Swedenborg wrote voluminously, and his earlier works were such as bore upon his special calling as an engineer, or upon medical subjects. He spent much of his time in London, and it was there, in fact, that his prophetic mantle first fell upon him, in the year 1745. He thus describes it: "I have been called to a holy office by the Lord, who has most graciously manifested Himself to me, His servant, and has opened my sight into the spiritual world, endowing me with the gift of conversing with spirits and angels." It is impossible for one reading these words in 1870 not to be struck by the coincidence of Swedenborg's views, even more than those of the Irvingites, with the doctrines of the modern Spiritualists. We shall see that this coincidence extends into very minute details. Being anxious to hear what the Swedenborgians had to say on the subject of alleged spiritual manifestations—such as table-turning, etc.—I took the opportunity, when purchasing a Swedenborgian book, to ask the question. I found they

quite conceded the reality of the phenomena, and their spiritual origin. They did not even, as the Irvingites, pronounce the communicating spirits to be evil, but still denied the legality of holding communion with them. "On what grounds?" I asked. "Because Swedenborg's revelation was final. In fact," added my informant, "this matter has well nigh caused a schism in our body; some members claiming the right of judging for themselves as to whether they shall communicate or not." I cannot help thinking this is the line I should take myself, could I recognize the claims either of the "spirits" or Swedenborg. The doctrine of finality, as appertaining to Swedenborg himself, is purely an assumption. After establishing his sect, and writing, both voluminously and at wearisome length, on all sorts of subjects in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, Swedenborg died in London, in March, 1772. It was some years before even the nucleus of a sect was formed. The body has never been a large one. It has now five principal churches in London, and one or two small places of meeting in the suburbs. Its principal strength lies in the county of Lancashire.

I attended, some years ago, an evening service in Devonshire Street, Islington, and recollect having

been much struck with the musical portion of the service, which, so far as I can now recall it, consisted largely of selections from the Apocalypse, describing the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven; a few verses being read by the clergyman, and then a portion chanted, as a refrain, by the choir and congregation.

The principal Swedenborgian church in London at the date of this article was that in Argyle Square, King's Cross, where the Rev. Dr. Bayley was minister; but he has since removed to the Mall Chapel, Kensington. It was the Argyle Square Church I selected on a Sunday as my basis of operations; and I could not help being struck by the fact, on entering the edifice, that there was positively nothing to tell the unlearned that it was not a Church of England "as by law established." The building is a large and handsome one, and the chancel occupied by the communion table, was flanked on either side by the reading-desk and pulpit. Even when the clergy entered, a worshipper might have remained unenlightened as to his being in other than an "orthodox" church. They were both elderly men, vested precisely as with the Church of England in surplice and bands. In passing from the vestry to the reading-desk or pulpit, Dr. Bayley opened a large

Bible which was lying on the communion table upon a velvet cushion, and left it open during the whole of the service, though no use was made of it. This is done as a sign that their authority as a church and their teachings are derived from the Word of God. There it remained, facing the congregation, like the one Gavazzi used to wear embroidered on his cassock. As though to keep up the illusion, the service opened with a hymn sung to the familiar tune of Rockingham. Then followed Confession and Lord's Prayer. Two Psalms (xxvii. and xxviii.) were next chanted. The music was much above par, and I noticed that the congregation sang from the Tonic Sol-fa notation. In the Psalms the word "Lord" was restored to its primitive form of "Jehovah," and in the readings of the particular Psalms Swedenborg's strange phraseology was used. For instance, plural terms were largely affected, such as "the Lord's contest with the hells," "falses," and "evils." And other grotesque forms of speech were adopted. We were informed in the Prayer-book that "human" was a noun substantive, and "conjugial" a term preferable to "conjugal," "esse" to "essence," and so on. Two lessons from the Old and New Testaments respectively followed; then the Commandments, the first and second being joined to form one, and the tenth divided into two, as

in the Lutheran and all other Churches on the Continent, and by all Churches up to the time of the Reformation. A "Kyrie" was introduced for the first time, Dr. Bayley explaining that the change was made at the suggestion of some musical friends; from which we may infer that the Swedenborgian rubrics (if there be such things) are not so Draconian as those of the Establishment, but leave some little discretion to the minister to suit the wants of his congregation. A sermon followed on a text taken from the second lesson—St. Matt. xii. 7, 8—"If ye had known what this meaneth, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice,' ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath Day." It was a simple, common-sense discourse on Sabbatarianism, without peculiarity of doctrine in any shape. It might have been a Broad Church clergyman of the Establishment who was delivering it. Dr. Bayley is fluent, and preaches extempore, or from scanty notes, but makes no pretence to eloquence; though I can quite understand that his congregation—which was large, intelligent, and with its fair share of the male sex—would be attracted by his preaching as much as by the doctrine underlying, but scarcely avowed; perhaps more so. Enlarging on the superiority of the Divine Law over

oral tradition, the preacher was mildly sarcastic as to the minute prescriptions of Jewish tradition on the subject of the Sabbath; as, *e.g.*, its permission to wash the hands, but not to clean the nails. He then went on to give a "scientific account of the creation," which would have gladdened the heart of Bishop Colenso. "God has never ceased to create, and never will," he said. "God does not rest on Sunday." He then passed on to a spiritual or allegorical application of the scriptural account, worthy of Origen himself, showing that every church went through seven stages of progress, analagous to the six days of creation and the Sabbath. Finally, he applied the matter to individuals, and that at such length that he was obliged to let his subject stand over, to be resumed on the following Sunday.

So, then, we had only come by a new and somewhat circuitous route to the same familiar end. Speaking broadly, we may say that the New Jerusalem creed superadds to slightly rationalistic views of the Trinity and Atonement a highly allegorizing method of scriptural interpretation, and, with regard to Swedenborg himself, and his revelation, views almost identical with those of modern spiritualism. Swedenborg had the power of inducing, in his own case, a state clearly the same as what we now call mesmerism or hypnotism.

He himself says of it, in the 'Arcana Cœlestia,' "The man is reduced into a certain state which is a sort of middle state between sleeping and waking. . . . In this state spirits and angels are seen, heard, and touched." The resurrection of the dead is immediate, there being no pause or suspension of existence; the fleshly body is cast aside once for all, and never re-assumed—a spiritual body, now resident in the fleshly tabernacle, being the true self that survives. Sex remains, and marriages are consummated in heaven. In fact, the spirit-world is but the region of realities, whereof all things here are the phenomena. And so we come back to Plato again; but Plato with a difference—that difference, however, scarcely so great as one might expect when, in a different age and nation, men's thoughts recur to the old cycle; seeming clearly to indicate some underlying law at work in such recurrence, and making good the assertion of the wise man—that there is nothing new under the sun.

THE NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH ON SPIRITISM.

To the uninitiated inquirer the line of demarcation between Swedenborgianism and modern Spiritualism —or Spiritism, as it is now called—must of necessity be shadowy and ill-defined. It would appear, at first sight, that the position assumed by Swedenborg, as the prophet of the New Jerusalem Church, would almost oblige that Church to recognize the so-called revelations claimed by the Spiritualists. To a certain extent this is the case: that is, the Swedenborgians are prepared to admit—what a great many of us cannot admit—not only the genuineness of the phenomena, but also their spiritual source; nay, they advance a step further, and even identify the communicating spirits. It is here, indeed, they part

company with the professed spiritualist, and approach very nearly, without quite reaching, the position assumed by the ordinary orthodox mind on the subject—that is, when orthodoxy does not go the length of denying the facts altogether. Where these facts are admitted, wholly or partially, the *rationale* usually appended is that their source is a diabolical one. The Swedenborgians adopt this theory in spirit, though varying the letter, and couching it in their own peculiar phraseology. They claim finality for the revelation of Emanuel Swedenborg. The Spiritualists, then, are in the position of a kind of Swedenborgian Nonconformists. The question of the legitimacy of spiritualistic communications has, in fact, gone far towards forming an open schism in the New Church. If the Spiritists may be correctly described as Swedenborgian Dissenters, the New Church, in its turn, is but an established, formulated, orthodox spiritism.

The announcement, then, which appeared recently, that Professor Tafel would lecture at the New Jerusalem Church, Cross Street, Hatton Garden, on "Mesmerism and Spiritism, as viewed by the light of the New Jerusalem Church," offered an irresistible attraction to one who, like myself, has made it his business to examine the nicer shades of religious belief. I must

confess that I expected to find the New Jerusalem Church thronged with the spiritualistic celebrities of London. I have got to know them pretty well by sight, but to my amazement I did not recognize one in Cross Street, Hatton Garden. Was it that the Sunday evening services of Mrs. Emma Hardinge, at Cleveland Hall, demanded the undivided attention of the faithful, or—gently be it insinuated—do the Spiritualists lean to "mutual admiration," and avoid the possibility of hearing their creed roughly handled? They would certainly have done so had they been present at Cross Street; but, as I said, there certainly was not a Spiritist of any standing there on the occasion of Professor Tafel's sermon.

The congregation was by no means so large as might have been expected, seeing the sermon had been freely advertised. Beyond one or two gentlemen, armed like myself with note-books, and seemingly bent on business rather than edification, the assembly appeared to consist of the regular attendants at the church. The service was exceedingly short, being composed of a few prayers and two hymns only, after which Professor Tafel plunged *in medias res*. It was a new sensation to hear such a topic broached by one arrayed in the familiar clerical attire of surplice and bands, though mounted withal on the

rostrum of Nonconformity instead of the orthodox pulpit. The question could not but occur—Why do the clergy *not* handle such topics as these? Spiritualism is emphatically a question of the hour, and has been fairly described by one of its adherents to be "either a gigantic delusion or the most important subject that can possibly be broached." Gamaliel's argument may be sound enough—that, if the thing be not from God, it will come to nothing; if it be from God, we must not fight against Him. Still, people have a perverse habit of thinking that if a subject is avoided, it is because it cannot be grappled with. This, however, by the way. Professor Tafel grappled with it hand to hand, beyond a doubt. He had read as the "lesson from the Word" Deuteronomy xviii., which so emphatically denounces "an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer;" and these denunciations he proceeded at once to apply to the modern Spiritualists.

He spoke with alarm of the growing numbers of these people, whom he alleged to be counted by the hundreds of thousands. The men of science were aghast. This tilting of tables, if authenticated, entirely destroyed their theory of gravitation. These responses of invisible beings by raps on the table, or

by the hand of writing mediums, distracted the minds of those who believed that man was going to rise again with his physical body, and who located the soul in the interim in some nondescript place, either below or above the earth. The men of science believed in material existence only, and either denied the facts, or, admitting some of them, said they were beyond the pale of science, because they could not be explained by natural causes. In the meantime the Spiritualists went their way unembarrassed, and their principles spread more widely day by day. The "theologians of the old school," again, he said, were powerless. They went to the Bible to prove that it was wrong to consult diviners, yet they themselves, in the face of the Bible and of reason, taught the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. Science and theology were alike powerless to stem the rising tide of Spiritualism. The danger had, in one respect, abated of late. Common sense had begun to judge Spiritualism by its fruits, and these were anything but satisfactory. It had been found to have a bad effect on the mental and bodily health. Nevertheless a rational explanation and exhibition of its dangers was still a desideratum. It was incumbent, then, on the "New Church" to supply that want. The works of Swedenborg bearing on the question had been written

between 1747 and 1772, just one hundred years ago. The phenomena of modern Spiritualism were evidently not permitted by God until the corrective came in the revelations of Swedenborg.

The teaching of the New Church, said the Professor, was that every phenomenon in the natural world is due to a spiritual cause. All objects in the three kingdoms of Nature—the mineral and vegetable as well as the animal—are produced and animated by corresponding objects in the spiritual world. Since God was in the human shape, so all the spiritual world was in the human form, and the tendency to assume this form was inscribed on all nature. The New Church taught that the spiritual world keeps the natural world in order by influx. The Church therefore did not *a priori* declare the phenomena of Spiritualism impossible. It viewed them in an affirmative state of mind. It believed in the immortality of the soul—that when the body dies, the soul enters at once into the spirit-world. This spirit-world it believed—with the Spiritists—to be in and around the natural world, and therefore it acknowledged the possibility of men in this world conversing with the departed. The New Church, however, held it impossible to see the departed with the natural eyes. Those only could see whose eyes were opened by the Lord,

and who were introduced by the Lord into the spirit-world. Emanuel Swedenborg's eyes were thus opened, and the Lord Himself so introduced him, commanding him to write down what he saw.

The Professor here went deeply into the *arcana* of what is termed general and particular influx, to appreciate which a previous acquaintance with the works of the Swedish seer is indispensable. Man he represented as *in equilibrio* between the influence of angels and spirits—presumably bad spirits——with his will left free. This is, in fact, the orthodox position, stated with technical differences of expression only. In a word the revelations of the Spiritists were traced to the (bad) spirits, and those of the New Church to the angels; which, of course, every Spiritist would set down as simply "begging the question." Finally, the preacher dwelt at great length upon Swedenborg's writings, and read voluminous extracts to prove the untrustworthy nature of spiritual communications, a position which, I fancy, all but very bigoted Spiritists indeed would freely concede. The spirits, he remarked, were very "fond of making up stories." Swedenborg was "not allowed to believe them." They were always "inventing lies." Then, again, man reacted on the communicating spirits, until those spirits really fancied they were the individuals they

personated. These facts, he remarked, were written down by Swedenborg one hundred years ago, when he had little idea how far the "talking with spirits" would extend. The only means of revelation as to God and the spirit-world was the written word. Every other method was "disorderly." Surely it must have struck the preacher that he was here almost quoting the "theologians of the old school" and the "men of science!"

Such, however, is the light in which the New Church regards modern Spiritism. Mesmerism was not touched, though included in the announcement. A final objection was couched in the somewhat broad assertion, that almost all Spiritualists held Christ to be mere man, after which the relations of Spiritualism and the New Church were summed up thus: Both recognized the existence of the spirit-world in and around the natural world; both admitted that man enters the spirit-world, and lives *immediately* after his departure from the natural world. The Spiritualists made the revelations of spirits their criterion of truth, whereas, the New Church said there is only one criterion, the Word of God, and if man studies this prayerfully, he is led into the "state of illustration." When new revelation is required, he said a "vessel" was chosen, and the work was not entrusted to "low

spirits." Swedenborg's mind was prepared from childhood, and, whilst he read the Scripture, he was so illuminated that he was enabled to formulate his revealments "in an orderly and rational manner."

As the distinguishing feature of Swedenborg was unquestionably the *cacoethes scribendi*, so is his disciple not altogether free from the *cacoethes loquendi*. The sermon was long but lucid, and no analysis can quite do it justice. I have endeavoured to lay it fairly before the public, remembering that my office in these papers is to describe, not to discuss, and so leaving them to say what amount of "light" the New Jerusalem Church of Emanuel Swedenborg throws on the confessedly dark—and, to some, the "uncanny" —subject of modern Spiritualism.

THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.

It is, in some respects, an advantage, when entering on the study of an unfamiliar subject, to do so with a mind entirely uninformed, and so without prejudice in reference to the matter on hand. This is especially my aim, in these studies of religious London—to make my mind, for the time being, a *tabula rasa*, ready to receive whatever impressions may reach it from without.

And probably in no section of religious development is this unbiassed judgment more essentially necessary than in the case of the so-called Plymouth Brethren. In the first place, the little that is popularly known, or supposed to be known about them, turns out on inquiry to be quite wrong, and the very title a misnomer—so much so that they invariably

treat it as simply a vulgar designation, writing the name of their body as I have done, thus, "The (so-called) Plymouth Brethren." The title appears to have originated in an idea that the sect originated in Plymouth, whereas the principal source was near Dublin, and instead of emanating from any of the outlying bodies of Nonconformity, many of their earlier apostles, and some of their present ministers, are ordained clergymen of the Church of England.

It is usually imagined that the Brethren—for so they elect to call themselves—have transferred to the nineteenth century the Apostolic doctrine of community of goods. That, however, as I imagined, is simply a popular fallacy. An intelligent member of their community, with whom I conversed on the subject, assured me they were not such poor political economists as that. They simply hold in great esteem that primitive constitution of the Church, and trust largely to the power of prayer for the supply of their temporal necessities. I have found the endeavour to grasp the distinctive doctrines of this sect as difficult as the attempt to catch Proteus. In fact, their *differentia* lies rather in an absence of positive dogma, and a broad division of mankind into the church and the world. Every "denomination" is wrong, because division is wrong; which amounts to saying that on

one side stands the Church—that is, the (so-called) Plymouth Brethren—on the other the world—that is, everybody who is *not* a Plymouth Brother. This, combined with an intense reverence for the written word—"the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible"—constitutes, broadly speaking, the special feature of the body. They date from the year 1827, and number, my informant supposed, possibly some 40,000; but as they have no external badge of distinction, and rather shun than court publicity or proselytism, it is not easy to gather statistics about them.

The Brethren have three principal places of meeting in London, and to one of these, the Priory, 198, Upper Street, Islington, I adjourned on a Sunday morning at eleven o'clock, armed with a few of the particulars above stated, and prepared to witness and report their exposition in public worship. The room, which is a moderate-sized school, was filled with a congregation of evident *habitués*, a very small portion at the back being railed off "for those not in communion." The service consisted principally of the singing of a large number of hymns, without instrumental accompaniment of any kind, and the reading of Scripture. There is nothing in the shape of pulpit or reading-desk, nor any person occupying the posi-

tion of minister or president. There was, I suppose, some preconcerted arrangement as to who should read, pray, or give out the hymn; but, to an outsider, it appeared that any of the Brethren took part without premeditation. Between each portion of the service there was a long pause of several minutes, during which the congregation sat with eyes closed, seemingly engaged in private prayer. The special object of the morning assembly (as I gathered at the door) was "the breaking of bread." This was done in the most homely manner possible. A loaf of home-made bread was placed, in common plates, on a table in the centre of the room, divided into quarters, and passed round the benches; each member helped himself or herself to a portion, literally "breaking" it off the quarter loaf. The wine was passed round in like manner, in large common tumblers, the administration of each element being preceded by prayer. It was a simple ceremony; but the idea could not fail to strike one that its very homeliness made it a close representation of the original supper in the long upper room and the daily bread-breakings of Apostles. After the Communion—as I suppose one may term it—followed another hymn, sung to the tune of "God save the Queen." Whether this loyal melody was designed to occupy anything like the position of our

Collect for the Queen I cannot say, but the effect was slightly incongruous. With this I imagined the proceedings would have closed, as I had been told there would be no sermon; but a sort of *sermonette* was introduced, it seemed—and, I believe, really was—on the spur of the moment. It was delivered by a very humble Brother indeed, in homely and not always accurate English; but he displayed minute knowledge of Scripture, and his sermon was intensely earnest—as the whole service had been—consisting, I am sure, as the preacher kept telling us, of "thoughts that had been pressing in upon his own soul." The two concluding prayers were offered by gentlemen of a very different mental *calibre*, and the congregation evidently numbered many persons of position and education. The names of "intending and accepted brethren" were then read, together with one who "sought restoration," and another who proposed to take to himself a Sister; and so the proceedings terminated, without—as will be evident—anything having transpired to inform one as to the special doctrines of the body. As I emerged from the Priory I saw the congregation coming out of Unity Church, Upper Street, where Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen, the Hindoo Reformer, had been enlightening the Unitarians on the doctrines of the Bramo Somaj; whilst, a little lower down,

another was beginning to besiege the doors of the Agricultural Hall, where Ned Wright was to preach to the working man. *Quot homines tot sententiæ.*

On the succeeding Wednesday evening I had been informed that a series of twelve lectures on the Five Books of Moses was to be opened by one of the principal men belonging to this body, a Mr. Kelly—for he eschews the title of Reverend, though he was, I believe, a minister of the Established Church, or certainly educated for the ministry. Thither I again adjourned in quest of information, and found a large congregation assembled, armed to the very teeth with their Bibles. I am bound to say that the lecture displayed an amount of critical and exegetical power for which I was not prepared. Mr. Kelly is a fluent and pleasing speaker, with every word of the sacred text at his fingers' ends; and having, moreover, a very complete knowledge of Bishop Colenso's book on the first eleven chapters of Genesis, against which his remarks were naturally, in the first instance, levelled.

Taking the first verse of the first chapter to embody the earliest creation of matter, the lecturer protested against the idea of its being originally created in confusion, but supposed an interval of undefined extent to have occurred between the narrative of the first and second verses, during which creation had,

from causes unexplained, got into confusion. He then plunged boldly into the Jehovistic and Elohistic theory, protesting against any diversity of documents, and, with great ingenuity, taking the name Elohim to refer to the Creative Power, whilst that of Jehovah pointed to the Covenant God of the Jews. Elohim was simply an historic name. Jehovah indicated special moral relationship. Passing on to the tree of life, he combated the idea that the smallness of the transgression was disproportionate to the punishment. The very essence of the matter lay in its smallness. It was simple disobedience to the expressed will of God. There was, and could be, no knowledge of good and evil; that only came with the Fall. He then passed on to consider the position of Paradise, and the naming of the objects of creation by Adam, inferring from the fact of Eve's not being named until after the Fall, that the Fall occurred very shortly after creation—"in fact, possibly on the very day." I ought to have mentioned that, after assuming the undefined *hiatus* between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis i., Mr. Kelly reads the succeeding days of creation as literal days of twenty-four hours. With regard to the actual Fall, he combated the idea that the narrative was in any way allegorical. It was not, as some supposed, the advent of lust that was typified; for lust did not come until after the Fall. After tracing

the ancient mythologies to the eve of the Deluge, and the association of the "sons of God" with the "daughters of men," Mr. Kelly applied the same method of explanation adverted to above in order to get over the two different accounts of the Deluge; and he concluded with arguments as to the unity of stock and the convergence of languages to a common point, showing himself fully conversant with modern controversy and well fitted to grapple with all its difficulties. Whatever else might be thought of the theories advanced, there could be no question as to their ingenuity and the minute acquaintance with the details of Scripture displayed in their exposition. The lecture, which was altogether extemporaneous, lasted an hour and a half, and I am free to confess I came away with a very different impression of the body from what I had previously possessed, when I thought them, as many I know do, only one other set of enthusiasts seeking to revive the first century literally in the nineteenth. I find—as one always does find in microscopic investigations—that there is still a "wheel within a wheel." There exists a schism from this body, occupying a position sufficiently important to justify a place in these papers; and the delineation of the offshoot will serve to bring into greater prominence still the distinguishing doctrines of the parent stock.

MR. NEWTON AT BAYSWATER.

THOUGH the primary object of those papers is rather to describe opinions than individuals, yet it generally happens that one man stands forth as prominently representative of a particular school of thought—and occasionally, as in the present instance, that an individual not only represents but exhausts, and in his single person embodies opinions so far diffused as to render their consideration necessary in a *résumé* of religious London. As an offshoot from Plymouth Brethrenism, too, Mr. Newton's creed and cultus serve to illustrate in a remarkable manner some of the principles of this little-understood but growing sect.

It is twenty-three years since Mr. Newton was virtually excommunicated by the Darbyite portion of the Brethren, so named from the leader of the

exclusive school. The gravamen was an accusation of holding doctrines similar to those which brought Edward Irving into collision with Scotch Presbyterianism. It was, in fact, in the course of a controversy with the Irvingites that some unguarded expressions fell from Mr. Newton's pen, making it possible to deduce from them the doctrine of the peccability of Christ's nature. Such a deduction was not made for several years, when the Brethren wished to exclude him from their ranks on account of certain peculiar views on prophetical subjects and matters of internal discipline. Then the old grievance was raked up, and the offending minister was expelled and anathematised with a zeal worthy of an Œcumenical Council at least, and curiously illustrative of the superior bitterness of the *odium theologicum* over other forms of "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness."

The history of this dispute, ranging, as has been said, over more than twenty years, embraces a literature of its own. It has positively rained tracts. In the innocence of my heart, when first I commenced the study of Brethrenism, I inquired, "Has it any literature! Are there any published documents to guide me?" Any literature! The bundle of broadsides before me, as I write, is a pleasing satire on the question. The differences between Mr. Newton and

the Brethren, however, may be, to a great extent, summarised under two or three heads. (1.) Whilst the Brethren exclude all denominations, and calmly date those documents, emanating from the Priory, Islington, as from "The One Assembly of God in London," Mr. Newton—who, I should add, is a former Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford—acknowledges the three Creeds of the Church and the first eighteen of the Thirty-nine Articles of the English Church. (2.) Among the distinguishing doctrines of the Brethren is the imminence of Christ's coming and the "secret rapture of the Saints;" whereas, Mr. Newton, basing his views on the revelations of prophecy, holds that certain events, to which I shall refer more at length in my account of his lecture, have yet to precede the closing-in of the present dispensation. (3.) The constitution of the Brethren is essentially democratic; it holds a "many-men ministry;" whilst Mr. Newton deems it essential to order that a definite head, or "one-man ministry," should exist. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ!* On these seemingly insufficient grounds—insufficient except on the theory of an Infallible Church—Mr. Newton has been expelled from "The One Church of God," and the members of that communion have been forbidden, under pain of excommunication and all sorts of un-

comfortable things, from holding any intercourse with one whose doctrines are described as "Satanic," "blasphemous," "deep, damnable, fundamental heresies." The upshot of all this has been a schism in the body—one more among the many sects whose existence was held to be symptomatic of the world in contradistinction to the Church. Numerous "followers" joined Mr. Newton in establishing a commodious iron church in the Queen's Road, Bayswater, where, at the time of writing this paper, he preached on Sundays, and delivered a lecture, generally on some prophetical subject, on Monday mornings at eleven o'clock. The chapel is now closed, but Mr. Newton retains, I believe, his interest therein.

The subjects of Mr. Newton's two preceding lectures had been largely illustrative of his peculiar views. They were "The Ephah of Zechariah," and "Exposition of Revelations xvii., xviii." In the former, which, by the way, has been already utilised by him in reference to the Exhibition of 1851—the ephah is taken to represent the spirit of commerce, in the same way as the crown represents monarchy, or the keys of the Church; and the woman within the ephah, pressed down with a leaden lid, symbolises morality repressed by this commercial spirit. Everything bad is covered by Mr. Newton's ever-recurring bugbears,

indifferentism and latitudinarianism. This spirit of commerce, levelling all religious differences, which Mr. Newton considers immoral, is carried to Shinar, where a house is builded for it. In this circumstance is detected an undoubted prediction of the revival of the ancient Assyrian Empire, with Babylon as its capital. Here the lawless spirit of commerce is to have full swing until the return of the Jews to Palestine, which will mark the close of this dispensation, and form the immediate precursor of the Millennium. These are the events which Mr. Newton expects, in place of the secret "rapture of the saints" hourly anticipated by the Brethren.

In his exposition of the two chapters, xvii. and xviii. of the Apocalypse, Mr. Newton deals first with the person, and secondly with the history, of this woman borne in the ephah to Shinar—in other words, the description and destiny of this great city Babylon, which is to rise from its ruins on the Assyrian Plains as the head of the resuscitated Roman Empire. Above the pulpit from which he lectured Mr. Newton had suspended a map embracing the territories of the Eastern and Western Empires, and divided into ten kingdoms, which he considers to be symbolised by the "ten horns of the beast." He then proceeded to pass in rapid review the tendencies exhibited in mo-

dern politics towards a revival of the Eastern Empire. The Emperor of the French, he said, had expressed a hope that the jealousy of the Western Powers would no longer prevent the development of the East. Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor are in process of re-civilization; but that civilization is only secular, and on that account it must have an awful failure. The Euphrates, however, is once more to become the great artery of the world, and the Euphratean railway will be the means of importing to the East the spirit of godless commerce. That a specious morality existed he did not deny; but it was a form of godliness renouncing definite truth—that is, it did not hold the three Creeds and the first eighteen Articles. The climax of such latitudinarianism might almost seem to have been reached when a Mahometan "officiated" at the opening of the Ephesus and Smyrna railway. In fact, he said, we were beginning now to put in practice the late Lord Macaulay's distinctly "atheistic" doctrine, that Christianity had no more to do with legislation than it had with mechanics. Earl Russell cannot quite "cave in," to this; but he says, "Sustain all religions;" and look at the result: here we have Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen put forward "with all his awful Theism," on professedly Christian platforms, asked his opinion as to what we are

to do with India, and last, but far from least, introduced to the British public by the Dean of Westminster (I am afraid Mr. Newton called the Dean "latitudinarian" when he came to England at the invitation of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. Now, says Mr. Newton, God requires definiteness. "Stanley," says there is no necessity for that—says that Scripture does not exhaust truth, that there is truth in Shakespeare and Milton as well as in Scripture. This is exactly what Alexander and the Roman emperors said. They were "latitudinarian." And this spirit will grow and spread until a climax is reached; that climax will be marked by the return of the Jews to the Holy Land. This position was not proved at all, but advanced as a mere assertion. Mr. Newton recurred once more at this point to the political question of the hour as illustrative of prophecy. There was the need of a strong central Power amongst the representatives of the old Roman world (France, England, etc.), in presence of the threatening Powers of Russia and America. All these ten kingdoms will need a strong federal union which is symbolised by the seven mountains—seven being the number of perfection, and the mountain typical of governmental skill. These different branches of governmental perfection have

never yet been concentrated. Napoleon approached their union most nearly, and so he himself approximated to the position of Antichrist; but the Antichrist who shall comprise all these governmental functions in their perfection is yet to come; and he will be the "Assyrian" of Isaiah x. Strangely enough, with all his love of order, Mr. Newton strongly objects to constitutional monarchy, and "goes in" for the "right divine of kings" in a way that would have delighted the heart of a Stuart. He holds it as idle to ask the people how they will be governed as it would be to assemble the servants and children of a family and consult them how Paterfamilias should manage affairs.

Such is the outline of a discourse, curious enough as delivered in London in the nineteenth century, and yet certainly interesting to those who are philosophical enough, or "latitudinarian" enough, to be able to appreciate the opinions of one with whom they fail to agree, and who evidently brings to the study—though it may be with a foregone conclusion—the work and devotion of a lifetime. It is only right to add, that Mr. Newton does not seek publicity or aim at proselytism; though I doubt if any church in Bayswater ever gathered such a congregation as he attracted on a Monday morning—except, perhaps, for

a fashionable marriage. But this gentleman and his "followers" are thoroughly in earnest. The Bible is to them the one rule of life. If commerce, constitutional monarchy, or Christian charity seems to clash with the Bible, then these things must go, and the Bible—as they expound it—the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, must reign supreme. To many of us, "optimists and latitudinarians," these things seem a little unreal. It looks somewhat like Infallibility, which may be made to attach to a book as well as to a man or to a Church. In fact, one is almost inclined to quote as *à propos* to Mr. Newton's position, what a zealous defender of his wrote about the Brethren who ejected him. "They (the Brethren) tell you, 'This is to be received. You are in darkness.' But where is the difference between this 'guidance' of the Brethren, and the 'inner light' of Fox, and the 'verifying faculty' of Colenso and the Rationalists, and the Infallibility of Rome?"

A QUAKERS' MEETING.

THE present is, in many respects, an age of destructive theology. Not content with declaring sermons unnecessary, and prayers by proxy foreign to the genius of a Church where free judgment reigns supreme, recent ecclesiastical criticism has even called in question the practice of reading Scripture lessons in church as suited only to an age and condition of society when people were unable to read for themselves. Supposing such canons allowed, we should be reduced to one of two extreme positions—Ritualism or Quietism—according as we developed the sensational or the spiritual element in worship exclusively. The tendency of the present day is decidedly in favour of the more sensational element; and, perhaps, therefore, it was on the principle of

contrariety that I resolved to undergo an experience of the opposite kind by attending a Quakers' Meeting. I found that the Society of Friends had few meeting-houses in London, and that most of these were situate in remote East-end regions. Fixing upon St. Martin's Lane as the scene of my exploration, there, between Nos. 110 and 111, I passed the portal of the Friends' Meeting-house, and found myself in a little old-fashioned, painfully-clean quadrangle where two or three sober-looking gentlemen, with stand-up collars and broadbrimmed hats, were engaged in conversation; and one of them, in reply to my inquiry whether there was accommodation for strangers, quietly but courteously handed me to a seat in the chapel.

The Quakers of St. Martin's Lane worship in a little, unpretentious building, painted from ceiling to basement with the favourite Quaker colour, and if possible cleaner than the quadrangle itself. There were seats around the four walls, and the centre of the building was fitted with benches running laterally; while at the extrême end were two rows facing the entrance, which were raised on a daïs, and were evidently intended for the use of some sort of ministers or officials. I was somewhat surprised at this, because I had always understood that the

Quakers recognized no regular ministry. Two difficulties occurred to me on entering the building. The first was with regard to my hat. Most of the congregation sat down with theirs on their heads; but natural politeness, and a wish not to sail any longer under false colours, induced me to risk eccentricity by taking mine off. Then, again, there were boys in the chapel. I had never before exactly realized the existence of Quaker boys, any more than I had seen Quaker babies; though, of course, if I had considered the matter, I should have known that, in the nature of things, both must exist. How in the world, I asked, were those boys going to get through two hours of silence? However, there they were, and in numbers sufficient to calm any fears as to the race of Quakers dying out at present. By eleven o'clock a fair congregation of some one hundred and fifty people had assembled, in equal proportions of men and women, the sexes being divided, and occupying different sides of the chapel, as in Ritualistic churches. And here let it be remarked very softly indeed that the young ladies, of whom a great many put in an appearance, were not at all what we generally understand or misunderstand as Quakerish in demeanour or attire. Silks rustled up the narrow aisle; but they were not of the pretty silver-grey hue that

Quakeresses are supposed to wear; and the bonnets were as killing and had as many flowers in them as you would see in an average West-End church. Some few, indeed, were prim-shaped and sober-coloured—a sort of compromise between society in general and the Society of Friends in particular; and perhaps these were the most killing of all. I even noticed upon the ungloved hand of a youthful Quaker matron considerably more jewelled circlets than the wedding-ring and keeper. Some six or seven people of both sexes sat in the seats facing the congregation; the exact centre being occupied by an elderly gentleman in what looked like High Church clerical attire, and a lady in the most correct Quakeress costume. I at once jumped to the conclusion that these were the "officiating ministers"—whether rightly or wrongly will appear anon. The men, as a body, were no more Quaker-like than the women, with the exceptions named. The rest were in ordinary attire; many having long beards, and some few quite a rakish-looking moustache.

At eleven o'clock our "silent service" commenced. The only outward and visible sign that it had begun was the simultaneous removal of hats on the part of the congregation; then, for nearly an hour there was silence—or, at least, silence broken only by the

mundane noises of the little St. Giles's boys and girls playing in the courts outside, and ever and anon by the far-off chime of Big Ben striking the quarters. There was no fidgeting even on the part of those marvellous boys; and there was considerably less coughing than, I feel certain, would have been the case in any other meeting. One by one covered their faces with their hands and engaged in silent prayer, still retaining their sitting posture, which was never changed throughout the entire proceedings. I confess that before the "Silent Service" was finished "an exposition of sleep" came over me. I had quite migrated to Dreamland when the slow and measured accents of the lady who was occupying the centre of the raised seats, and on whom I had fixed as the officiating minister, startled me from my reverie. The Spirit had moved her, and she delivered a brief practical address on the necessity of personal holiness. The preacher, as I have said, was arrayed in full Quaker costume, and from beneath her grey bonnet peered a face such as one might have seen under the wimple of a Lady Abbess, or in the painted figure of a Mater Dolorosa—a wan, ascetic countenance. Another quarter of an hour's silence followed the conclusion of this discourse; and then the clerically-dressed gentleman took up his parable. He

was a well-built and tolerably rubicund, country-parson kind of individual—one from whom you would have expected a *basso profondo* voice; whereas he spoke in the shrillest falsetto, preaching for about twenty minutes, and his address was more doctrinal than that which preceded it. He spoke strongly against the possibility of ordinances such as "bread-eating, wine-drinking, or water-sprinkling," bringing Christ nearer to the soul than his own presence, which had been promised wherever "two or three should be gathered together in His name." These words were, in fact, though not formally, the text of his discourse; and it struck me that, to an already initiated congregation, the teaching must have been very elementary indeed. Then, again, silence for another quarter of an hour or so; and suddenly, at the stroke of one, hats were reassumed, and a general shaking of hands commenced, with animated conversation, and every appearance of relief from a conscious restraint. Remembering our custom when "Break" was called in school-days, I almost expected the boys to start up with a war-whoop, but they were not more demonstrative than their papas. In little boxes affixed to the wall were tracts, looking not unlike the time-tables similarly placed in the stations of the Metropolitan Railway. I complied with an

inscribed invitation to "take one," and found it to consist of a brief résumé of Quaker doctrine and discipline, together with excerpts from some larger manual of "Advice." Among its paragraphs occur the following :—

"The Society of Friends believe that worship consists not in rites nor ceremonies, nor in an outward service. It is a heart-worship not to be performed by proxy one for another.

"Seeing that 'God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth,' it is their practice to sit down together in silence, to seek individually, by heartfelt prayer, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, by whose aid alone true spiritual worship can be performed.

"The confession of the soul prostrate before God, the secret prayer of the afflicted, the earnest wrestling of spirit, the simple exercise of faith, the humble thanksgiving, the spiritual song and melody of the heart—these, though they may be unspoken, are among the sacrifices of true Christian worship, acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ.

"The Society of Friends regard vocal prayer and preaching as being also important parts of worship ; but they believe that these exercises should not be begun and ended at stated times, nor by previous arrangement, but only under the guidance and by the immediate help of the Holy Spirit: consequently they do not make use of congregational singing, nor of stated forms of prayer, in their worship ; nor do their ministers adopt the practice of preparing sermons beforehand.

"They believe that it is in accordance with the precepts of the New Testament that there should be no special appointment of one man to minister to a congregation ; but that 'all' (women as well as men), 'may' if called to it of God, offer prayer,

'prophesy (or preach) one by one, that all may learn and all may be comforted.'" [1 Cor. xiv. 31.]

Among the subjects of advice occur the following excellent items common to all Christian bodies :—

"Follow peace with all men, desiring the true happiness of all; be kind and liberal to the poor, and endeavour to promote the temporal, moral, and religious well-being of your fellow-men.

"Watch with Christian tenderness over the opening minds of your children; inure them to habits of self-restraint and filial obedience; carefully instruct them in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; and seek for ability to imbue their hearts with the love of their Heavenly Father, their Redeemer, and their Sanctifier.

"Guard watchfully against the introduction into your households of publications of a hurtful tendency.

"Avoid vain sports and places of diversion, all kinds of gaming, the unnecessary frequenting of taverns and other public houses, and the improper use of intoxicating liquors; and guard against such companionships, indulgences, and recreations, as by their influence may interfere with your growth in grace.

"Finally, let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel. Exercise yourselves to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man."

Such, in a few of its more salient points, is the simple worship of those by whom the memory of Fox and Penn is preserved among us still. As the old term "Quaker" is very properly dying out and giving place to the more expressive name of

"Friends," so does the system itself seem to be following what is doubtless a natural law, and to lose some of its rigidity and eccentricity. Those matrons and maidens have learnt that matronly and maidenly purity may exist independently of an obsolete attire —nay, perhaps have laid to heart the fact that obstinate retention of antiquated dress and forms of speech that have been outgrown are really as affected as compliance with the latest requirements of "Le Follet" or the adoption of the most vapid young lady's perversion of her mother-tongue. The Society is confessedly on the decline; nor are the causes of its decadence hard to find. Advancing intelligence tells us that, in order to avoid the Charybdis of carnalism, there is no need to seek the Scylla of Quietism.

DR. CUMMING IN CROWN COURT.

WHEN first I commenced these erratic theological studies, there were two "representative men" I especially set before my mind's eye as deserving contemplation. First, the man who, rightly or wrongly, was reported to have fixed the date of the Day of Judgment; and, secondly, one who could possibly believe that a certain portion of his fellow-creatures were brought into existence simply to be condemned at last, no matter how sincere their efforts for salvation, while a certain other portion were created to be saved, independently of any efforts on their own part. I have realised these two ideas, not only with my mental vision, but with my bodily eyes and ears, and to their delineation I must now devote some attention.

At the convergence of two courts which debouch opposite the entrance of Covent Garden and Drury Lane Theatres respectively, stands Crown Court Chapel, the shrine of Dr. Cumming, of Millennial notoriety. Thither I wended my way on a Sunday morning, and, being directed by a placard to the proper entrance for "strangers," found a long *queue*, like that outside a Parisian theatre, gradually in process of absorption into the building. I defiled along with the rest, and, on entering, saw the well-known features, so familiar in the photographer's shops, of Dr. Cumming himself, who had already entered the pulpit or desk—the two are one—arrayed in Geneva gown and bands. Proceedings commenced with an interminable hymn, of I am afraid to guess how many verses, fairly sung, without accompaniment, to a rather monotonous air. Prayer followed; and *what* prayer, think we? Dr. Cumming paraphrased—*credite posteri!*—the Lord's Prayer! It was a farrago of the Lord's Prayer, the Litany of the Church of England, and the extemporaneous effusion of Dr. Cumming himself. An anthem followed, the "audience"—it was specially so termed by Dr. Cumming—sitting, and then followed a Scriptural exposition.

Now, either my visit to this chapel was most pro-

videntially timed, or else Millenarianism forms the staple food of Dr. Cumming's flock to an extent of which one dreads to think, for his exposition was based on the veritable 24th of Matthew itself, wherein occur the actual words that had prompted me to visit this particular shrine: "Of that day and hour"—that is, of judgment—"*knoweth no man*; no, not the angels of heaven; but my Father only." In the course of a long exposition, Dr. Cumming did not say one word about this particular verse! The interpretation of the chapter was the obvious one of dividing it at v. 28, and applying the former portion to the destruction of Jerusalem, the concluding part to the Judgment. The most noticeable feature was the constant intrusion of Greek equivalents for English words, as though Dr. Cumming's recent attack upon the Pope in Ecclesiastical Latin had given a classical turn to all his thoughts. For instance, we were informed that "coming" was παρουσια, and "kingdom," βασιλεια, and "witness," μαρτυριον, and that "the world," οικουμενη—pronounced by Dr. C. οικοιμενη—gave the name to the Pope's Œcumenical Council. (Dr. Cumming probably had not heard of the other etymology, which assigns the name to the French *écume*—"froth,"—or he might have made "a hit, a palpable hit.") As a summary,

he requested any of his "audience" to open their morning papers and this chapter side by side, and compare the signs of the τελος της οικουμενης. A "paraphrase hymn," from 2 Peter iii. followed, the burden of which was,—

> "Yet as the night-wrapped thief, who lurks
> To seize the expected prize,
> So steals the hour when Christ shall come,
> And thunder rend the skies."

After a collect and Lord's Prayer began the sermon, and—*toujours perdrix!*—its subject was again selected from Matt. xxiv. 14, and was announced by the preacher himself as "Good news from the Distant Land." "If I were to tell you gold had been found in Scotland," said Dr. C., "what a rush there would be for the Northern train!" (There is, by the way, a popular idea that the rush is generally the other way, and that return tickets are not taken.) "I have better news than that; news for all—for the poorest inhabitant of Brewer's Court, or of Drury Court, which beats it hollow, I tell you;" though it was quite certain no denizen of Brewer's Court was there to hear "of that which is more satisfying than money or fame"—commodities hardly likely to abound in either of the specified localities. "We all feel life ebbing away, and"—I am sorry to say Dr. Cumming

does not look forward. The expiration of the Lease of Time is only determined in order to enable us to take possession of the Freehold of Eternity." From this somewhat incongruous metaphor, Dr. Cumming passed to the strongest, because most human, point of his sermon, and eloquently declared his belief that this land to which death conducted us was not really a distant land. "I do not believe," he said, "that at the hour of death there is one moment's suspension of conscious existence. Nay, I even believe that in the so-called insensibility or unconsciousness that often precedes bodily dissolution the dying person is still sensible, still conscious. It is only that the electric wire of the nerves has lost the power of carrying messages from the inhabitant within to those outside. It has become a non-conductor." The sermon then took a Broad Church tone, but qualified by many narrownesses. This preaching of the Gospel to "all nations" was now literally fulfilled. Hinduism was beginning to assume the form of a "detected imposture;" the crescent of Mahometanism was waning; "the spectral shadow of Rome" was becoming thinner. This Council was the greatest blunder ever committed by an Infallible Pontiff. It disclosed to the world the divisions tearing asunder the body of

her who had boasted, "I sit as Queen." All these things are in "our" favour. "We" are on the winning side; though it was not quite clear to what an extent the "we" was meant to be inclusive. This kingdom of God, Dr. Cumming argued, is not meat and drink, which he explained to mean, not a thing of dalmatics, copes, and incense. It is not Episcopacy nor Presbytery, not sect nor shibboleth, but righteousness, joy, and peace. All men baptized and unbaptized, sprinkled or immersed—all are sons of God. All are "born again," if they only have love for God, and charity to forgive one another's sins. The Pacific of Eternity and the Atlantic of Eternity are now united by Christ, and no sands could ever block up that channel. Above all, this kingdom of God is not Calvinism. Christ will save all who will let Him save them.

"Every man and woman here present," exclaimed Dr. Cumming, warming with his theme, "may be a Christian before yonder dial points to one o'clock," and it was then pointing to 12.20. "I like," he said again, "to meet with an out-and-out infidel. I can say to such a man, 'I respect you, for your doubt is manly.' But I have no respect for the man who, believing that God has died for him (*sic*) neglects that fact. Neglect is childish. This Gospel—this

'good spell,' or glad tidings—is now being preached in every land. We now preach κηρυσσομεν, this good tidings, good spell, in all the world, ἐν πασῃ τῃ οἰκουμενῃ, for a witness, εἰς μαρτυριον." I here give really an unexaggerated specimen of Dr. Cumming's linguistic illustrations. This announcement is made, he argued, by means of the publications of the British and Foreign Bible Society, not necessarily for the conversion of all the nations, but for a witness to them —a witness of the efficacy of the blood that was shed for the remission of their sins, though those sins might be "as scarlet." The preacher here apologetically introduced an illustration which he did not feel sure to be "chemically correct," and about which I am quite unable to check him. A paper-maker told him that he could utilise all rags for the purposes of his trade—could make them all into white paper with the single exception of "scarlet" rags. Out of these he could only make pink blotting-paper. "What a striking illustration! The text in question, you see, does not say, 'Though your sins be blue, or purple, or green,' but 'though they be scarlet, they shall be as white as wool.' The impossibility of chemistry is the possibility of Christ." This good news of the Distant Land it is the mission of the Christian preacher to announce as a herald, not to

prove "like the Scotch divines." "There was a certain M.P.," said Dr. Cumming, dropping his voice to the very lowest pitch, as though in recognition of the senatorial dignity, "who sat here for years. When he came he was an Unitarian. He went away a believer." Preaching—so I understood the preacher—was to fill up the gaps in revelation, and was better than all "cathedrals and confessing-boxes." Do not neglect it. Such was the substance of the peroration. Another paraphrase hymn on Rev. i. 5-9 was then sung—"Behold on flying clouds He comes;" an extempore prayer was offered, and benediction was pronounced, and so I passed out into St. Giles's, where the string of carriages outside Crown Court, seemed little symptomatic of Brewer's Court or Drury Court, the inhabitants whereof, to judge by appearances, had given themselves up to traffic in birds. As I passed through Seven Dials I heard a despairing purchaser pathetically lament that "'en birds" that Sunday morning were "sellin' at cock prices!"

It will be evident, from the foregoing sketch, that Dr. Cumming's hearers are accustomed to "strong meat." To such a Millennium as he preached, and which he believed would be realised in this world, possibly none of us would object. It would, indeed, be only what we all pine for, as larger even than that

"common Christianity" which so many talk about, so few realize; it would be a recognition of the universal fatherhood of God—a practice of universal charity to man. But in the course of this one sermon, Dr. Cumming cut off from such charity the Hindus, the Mahometans, the Roman Catholics, the wearers of copes and dalmatics, the frequenters of confessing-boxes and cathedrals—nay, in less severe terms, "the Scotch divines" themselves. Surely, then, the Broad Church principles with which he set out as his major premises become lost when made of individual application in the minor, as body after body of religionists is tried and found wanting. Such was the conclusion to which Dr. Cumming's arguments led him—namely, to a very select Millennium, coextensive it might almost seem, with his own congregation; or else I was guilty of a very false process indeed in my visit to Crown Court.

DR. CUMMING ON THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF EUROPE.

SUCH was the momentous question proposed by Dr. Cumming as the subject of a lecture at Myddelton Hall, Islington. It is not too much to say that if he could solve it satisfactorily, he would establish that character of the nineteenth-century prophet to which, rightly or wrongly, he is supposed to aspire. It is possible that a certain amount of prejudice exists as to Dr. Cumming's claim; and no doubt the previous portion of the title, "The Outpouring of the Seventh Vial," would lead many persons to doubt whether his treatment of the matter would be altogether a practical one; yet, still, the subject was so supremely the question of the hour that it is no marvel the hall was filled with a vast audience, numbering many beyond

Dr. Cumming's immediate admirers and disciples. Any accurate delineation of the present, or probable forecasting of the future, of Europe was too urgent a desideratum, when the Franco-Prussian War was scarcely over, to render us very scrupulous as to the quarter whence it may be obtained. Since the commencement of the Franco-Prussian War—indeed subsequently to the capitulation of Sedan—Dr. Cumming had published a work of some 300 or 400 pages bearing the same title as his lecture; but the march of events was so rapid and unexpected that much still remained to be said.

After stating briefly his method of Apocalyptic interpretation, and the division of the Book of Revelation into twenty-one portions, devoted severally to the breaking of the seven seals, the blowing of the seven trumpets, and the outpouring of the seven vials, the lecturer stated it as his belief that we were living under the twenty-first epoch, or seventh vial, and proposed to read the details of Rev. xvi. in the light of current history, as reported in the daily papers, empanelling his audience as a jury to decide whether the one set of facts did or did not lie over against the other. The result of the outpouring of the sixth vial had been the procession of three evils spirits from the mouth of the dragon, which Dr. Cumming identified

severally with the atheistic—including therein the Broad Church—school; the Roman heresy; and its emissaries, the Jesuits and propagandists of every grade, both within and without the Established Church. Speaking of the activity of the Roman Catholic priests, Dr. Cumming took such activity as a sign of sincerity, and paid a high tribute to Archbishop Manning, with whom he stated he himself had enjoyed a friendly correspondence. According to the lecturer, the Archbishop could boast of having made 2000 converts in the N.W. district of London alone! Here the Doctor inserted one of his characteristic anecdotes. A young nobleman had been a frequent attendant at his chapel in Crown Court, and Dr. Cumming expressed his satisfaction at finding this representative of the aristocracy had not been "infected by Dr. Pusey." "Do not mistake," said a lady to whom he expressed his gratification; "he does not come here because he is in love with you, but with a young lady in your congregation." The papa of this young lady put the question to the aristocratic lover whether he meant to go over to Rome, and, on being answered in the affirmative, the young lady of Crown Court voluntarily resigned "the marquisate and £3000 a year!" Though not generally advocating "sensation novels," Dr. Cum-

ming recommended his audience to read 'Lothair' on this subject. He was also pleasantly sarcastic on the awkwardness of the Ritualists in "genuflecting," stating that, in attempting to imitate his Roman brethren, the Ritualist posed himself in the shape of a right-angled triangle. All these three influences were at work on the "Œcumenical"—*i.e.* the world—the ten kingdoms of Europe are being deceived by them; and the result was the gathering of the forces to the great war of Armageddon. Now, ever since the opening of the first Crystal Palace of 1851, he continued, peace has been prophesied. What have been the results? The Crimean war, the Indian mutiny, the American war, the Austro-Prussian, and now the Franco-Prussian wars. The characteristic of the present war is that the great Protestant Power of Europe is chastising the Catholic. "And I see another war," said the lecturer, "predicted in the great hail of the Apocalypse." Hail in the prophetic Scriptures means Northern invasion; and to what can this refer but to Russia? Russia believes it her destiny to rule in the East. The attempt was premature in 1854; but ever since M. Thiers was at St. Petersburg the trains in Russia have carried nothing but troops. Hence he infers that Russia is preparing to fulfil her destiny. Turkey is moribund, and, he

concluded, the sooner she is swept away the better. France is no longer a counterpoise to Russia. What remains but England? And in what position are we? Our only resource is at once to treble our army and volunteers.

Passing from the Apocalypse to the Gospel of St. Luke, the lecturer finds "earthquakes" to be a sign of the last times. If these be read to mean material shakings of the earth, 1868 bears in America the name of the "earthquake year." "The sea and waves roaring" was to be another sign. Has not this been fulfilled in the vast sea waves, sometimes sixty feet high, of which we have heard of late? The *New York Times* began a leader with the words, "We are not disciples of Dr. Cumming; but there is certainly something the matter with the earth." "It may be egotism," the lecturer continued, "but I may remind you that in a lecture at Exeter Hall I stated, from a computation of the 'time, time and half a time,' that the time of the Gentiles would expire in 1867. If this be correct, I said, there will follow, after 1868, an unprecedented war, earthquakes, and the deposition of the Pope. This was taken down in shorthand. Has it, or has it not, been fulfilled?" Dr. Cumming here passed in review the recent events in Spain, Austria, and Italy; and, by way of climax,

informed the audience that the last blow had now been given to Papal authority in Italy by priests resolving to marry. A young priest "proposed" to a lady, and, the fact having come out in confession, resulted, of course, in the banns being forbidden. The priest appealed to the civil law, and it was decided, not only that priests, but even the Pope himself might marry, if he chose. Now, if all the priests married, Dr. Cumming decided that the Church would soon fall to pieces. Contemporaneously with this mutinous spirit within, there was a movement outside the Church. The Waldenses are reported to be rising all over Italy. Even Napoleon himself has not only withdrawn his soldiers from Rome, but, on one occasion, when he was "interviewed" by Dr. Cumming and certain Protestant *pasteurs*, the ex-Emperor thus delivered himself: "If I had my will, no priest should rise above the level of the sole of my foot." All this, said Dr. Cumming, followed close upon the decree of Infallibility. So the Apocalypse said that, when Babylon boasted "I am queen," then her trouble should come.

The consummatian of this outpouring was to be that the Great City should be divided into three parts; and Dr. Cumming quoted the *Times* corre-

spondent (though he did not believe that gentleman read his Bible), who gave it out that the probable future of Europe would be a tripartite division, into Pan-Slavonianism, Pan-Teutonism, and Pan-Latinism, represented by Russia, Germany, and the Catholic Powers respectively. Then, again, "the cities of the nations" were to fall. Reading this literally, what could it refer to but the surrender of Strasburg and Metz? Adopting the reading of the Sinaitic text, which substitutes "city of the nations," it plainly referred to Paris—so eminently the city of all the nations of the civilized world. Here the lecturer, by way of peroration, referred again to the signs in the Sun, pointing out how the photosphere had been recently described as "riddled with holes;" to a volcano in the Moon, which had been observed to be in active eruption in 1868-9; to "falling stars," in connection with which he calculated the probability of our whole system gravitating to the Sun and so being destroyed; and finally, among the "signs of the times," the aurora borealis of the past week was numbered. This phenomenon Dr. Cumming believed to be identical with the "primæval light," which existed before the creation of the Sun. "I am not superstitious," he concluded; "but certain signs are set down. Do not these correspond?"

The question, of course, remains, Has there ever been a period when such signs did not exist? Does not therefore the constancy of such signs seem designed to keep us always on the alert; and rather to forbid, than sanction, such vaticinations on a subject which Scripture declares unknown to men and angels? At all events, the lecture, which lasted nearly two hours, added little to our information as to the existing condition of Europe; whilst really the only prediction as to the future was one which has already occurred to the minds of politicians without any aid from prophecy, pointing to a possible complication in the direction of Russia and the Eastern question. It was a clever adaptation of obscure prophecy to current events; and as such, no doubt, delighted the already initiated disciples of Dr. Cumming. We fear that neophytes would come away slightly disappointed at the meagre amount of information supplied in answer to that even still-vexed question—the actual present, and probable future, of Europe.

SURREY CHAPEL.

I WAS wandering in transpontine London one Sunday morning in search of a new heresy—I use the word in its literal, and therefore inoffensive, sense—when, finding the particular heresiarch of whom I was in quest had changed his quarters, the difficulty occurred to me how I should spend the morning profitably. The world of religious London was "all before me where to choose" my place of rest, and I eventually decided upon looking in on the Rev. Newman Hall at Surrey Chapel, Blackfriars. It occurred to me that the occasion was peculiarly opportune, since that gentleman had just returned from his tour in the East, and was about to put his renovated strength to the proof by preaching morning and evening at Surrey Chapel, and in the afternoon at St. James's Hall.

Accordingly I gained the quaint circular edifice under the railway arch, whose unecclesiastical ugliness perpetuates the memory of the celebrated Rowland Hill, and was proceeding to make my way into the interior, after listening for a few minutes to the simple oratory of the open-air preacher who was holding forth to a moderate knot of people in the chapelyard, whilst a fringe of idlers from the New Cut dangled between that busy centre of Sunday traffic and the preacher, half inclined to join his congregation, but feeling the *genius loci* too strong for the nonce. Here, however, an unexpected difficulty met me. Even at the shrine of Dr. Cumming strangers were allowed to enter one particular portion of the edifice, but at Surrey Chapel the regular congregation is so large that a passage has to be kept clear for them amidst the crowd of outsiders, and two stalwart doorkeepers found it no sinecure to do so on this particular morning, when, no doubt, the fact of the pastor's return swelled the numbers of his flock. Some of the flock, indeed, had a little grace awarded them, and the consequence was that the service had advanced some way when I at last effected an entrance. The large building was so nearly filled that the narrow passages between the "wedges" of pews had to be lined with seats, and I was fain to perch myself on a bracket, being fortunate,

indeed to get even that; for directly the building was thrown open to the public it was literally crammed, and I fancy many must have gone away without getting in at all.

Now my curiosity had been awakened with regard to Surrey Chapel, by the fact of my having seen it set down in my list of chapels quite apart from all others. After the various denominations had been duly catalogued, some four or five most heterogeneous creeds had been grouped together as "other denominations," and amidst these stood "Surrey Chapel, Rev. Newman Hall, LL.B." I had no notion, therefore, of what I was going to see, and was not a little surprised, when I did get in, to find the reading-desk occupied by a curate in most orthodox surplice and bands, who was engaged in reading the Morning Prayers of the Church of England, whilst the Rev. Newman Hall himself—whom I recognized from his portraits, despite a beard and moustache which have recently supervened—was seated, in the same costume, in a sort of clergy pew beneath the pulpit. The late arrivals had been vouchsafed some grace, as I have said, for the curate began the Psalms for the day as I entered. These were read, and one marked difference from the Established Church struck me immediately. All the congregation made the responses not only

audibly, but in earnest voices, as though they really meant what they were saying. I never heard so much life put into a Liturgy before. It was, in fact, our Church of England service without the rigidity attaching to strict Rubrical observance. For instance the second lesson was Matthew xiii., an extremely long chapter, which the officiating clergyman very wisely abridged by about one half. Surely a vast amount of the necessity for Liturgical revision would be done away with if some such discretion as this were left to the clergy. Between the lessons the "Te Deum" was sung to a regular cathedral service; but again I was surprised to hear the congregation join it, instead of remaining mere passive listeners. After the second lesson the curate left the desk, and the Rev. Newman Hall took his place, saying the rest of the prayers. Up to the suffrages after the Creed, the service—whilst I was present—was exactly that of the Church of England; but here, as also in the Litany, the repetition of the Lord's prayer was judiciously omitted. There were one or two verbal alterations in the Litany; *e.g.*, "From sudden and *unprepared* death, good Lord deliver us," and "Bishops and teachers," instead of "Bishops, priests, and deacons;" whilst another suffrage was enlarged—"That it may please thee to protect our fellow-countrymen

scattered over the world, in the British Colonies and the United States of America, and to bless and keep all Thy people." In the General Thanksgiving, too, which was recited heartily by all the congregation, a special clause was introduced with the words, "The pastor of this church desires to offer thanks for the safe return of himself and fellow-travellers." I dwell on these details because the service that morning at Surrey Chapel struck me in the light of a phenomenon, giving us at least a clue how to combine the order of a fixed Liturgy with the amount of adaptation necessary to make any formal prayer really express the spiritual necessities of a particular body of worshippers. The congregation consisted, for the most part, of solid middle-class men, with their wives and families, and though the service was in many respects ornate—the choral portions being of really rare excellence—it was quite evident that all sympathised with it. It was, in fact, an honest expression of their feelings, as far removed from formality as possible.

The service concluded with the Litany, notice being given that the Lord's Supper would be celebrated at 3 P.M., and then Mr. Hall ascended the pulpit. Having delivered a rather long but impressive extempore prayer, he gave out as his text Romans xv. 29, "I am sure that when I come unto you I shall come

in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." The preacher remarked that, although uncertainty chequered the details of the Christian course, there was assurance as to the end, now, as in Paul's case. Bringing round the inquiry to the peculiar circumstances under which they, as pastor and congregation met that morning, he observed that fulness consisted, 1st, in fulness of Gospel truth, and referred to Paul's preaching in "his own hired house" as an illustration of that fulness. Fresh from visiting the traditional house of Paul at Rome, Mr. Hall placed the fulness of his teaching in the declaration of Christ's divinity. "We want a full Christ, not a limited one." Christ's death was not only that of a martyr—it was a sacrifice—and He an atoning Mediator. All who appropriate this sacrifice by faith are saved, "without man's ceremonies." There is no need of purgatorial fire hereafter, or even of long prayers here. The result is immediate. Simply believe and be saved. "I have seen," said the preacher, "ceremonial worship abroad; I have seen a cold Protestantism. But what we want is a full Christ, not only preached by us, but received by you. You are called the 'laity,' but in the Bible you are called kings and priests. Demand, then a full Gospel. You want talent and genius if you can get them, but beyond these is a full Gospel.

University degrees are trumpery; Apostolical Succession as sounding brass in the absence of the full Gospel." Then, secondly, with reference to the fruits, "We believe," he said, "in Holy Baptism, but we do not believe that makes a child of God. The Holy Communion does not incorporate into Christ. Conversion is still needed. Do not think it is only the traffickers in the great street yonder, or the drunkards in its gin-palaces, that need conversion; all need it." He then passed on to speak of love, joy, and peace, as fruits of the full Gospel, and in an eloquent peroration he said, "I have been wandering by the banks of the Ilissus, and over the plains of Attica; I have seen Italy and France in all their vernal beauty—so may we be full of the beauty of holiness!"

From these extracts it will be seen that the tenets of Surrey Chapel do not differ in the main from those of Evangelical churchmen. In matters of discipline, indeed, it is only from the fact of not belonging to the State Church that this body can be brought within the limits of 'Unorthodox London.' "We are no sect," says Mr. Hall himself; "we have no name; we are simply Christians. Rowland Hill never intended to leave the Church of England, but they forced him to do so, because he would preach wherever people would listen to him; and he would fraternize with all

who were trying to do good, though not in the Church of England." And again, "We never know what discord means. All are at work for God and man. There is no sectarian test of membership. We have Baptists, Episcopalians, Methodists, etc. etc. etc. We know nothing of these distinctions." Amongst the good works done here—for Surrey Chapel is no mere "preaching house"—are the education of 5000 children in Sunday schools, and 700 in week-day schools, by 450 voluntary teachers; three missionaries visit the houses of the poor; and Sunday evening services are held in seventeen lodging-houses, among beggars, costermongers, etc. Benevolent societies and penny banks minister to bodily necessities, while by a recent arrangement the chapel itself, instead of being shut up from Sunday to Sunday, through ideas of "consecration," is opened on week evenings for popular education and amusement. Mr. Hall frequently lectures himself, and such men as Mr. Thomas Hughes and Mr. Layard have helped him. Thousands of eager artisans, he says, avail themselves of this arrangement, which proves a counter-attraction to the gin-shop. Temperance, it should be added, is strongly advocated at Surrey Chapel.

The only approach to test or form of Church membership consists in the subscription to a "confession,"

which is publicly renewed and ratified every year, and which, after briefly setting forth the outlines of faith alluded to in the above sermon, thus concludes:

"We desire to present ourselves—spirit, soul, and body—time, property, influence—a living sacrifice unto God. We will endeavour in all things to prove that we love Him, by obeying His commandments. We will endeavour, in private and public, in our households, in our business, in daily life, in all places, in all companies, to act as becometh the Gospel; to promote true religion in the hearts of others; to help the needy, comfort the sorrowful, and to diminish vice, ungodliness, and misery in the world, 'looking for that blessed hope the glorious appearance of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.' And knowing, from numerous past failures, how unable we are of ourselves to do anything that is good, we do earnestly implore the help of Him, without whom we can do nothing, but who has said, 'My grace is sufficient for you.'

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to this our solemn Covenant we do now severally and unitedly assent—with a solemn and a hearty—Amen."

SATURDAY WITH THE SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS.

SURELY strangest of all strange nooks and corners of "Haunted London" is the little chapel in Goodman's Fields where I spent a Sabbath afternoon with the Seventh-day Baptists. It was not without some difficulty that I traced out, by help of the Post-office Directory, this oasis in the great desert of East-London. The chapel I found to be in Mill Yard, Hooper Square; Hooper Square turns out of Leman Street, at No. 89; and Leman Street runs at right angles to High Street, Whitechapel. At Hooper Square accordingly I presented myself, but it was still with the greatest difficulty that I learned the locale of Mill Yard, even from its nearest neighbours. It was an unlikely-looking, unsavoury place when I did

find it. No. 15, I had learned, was the address of the minister, W. H. Black, described as "antiquary and record agent." High gates with a wicket lay between Nos. 14 and 16. I opened, and straightway found myself at the door of the minister's house; a green churchyard was in front of me studded with gravestones, and filled with most unexpected trees, bounded on one side by the quaintest of old school-houses, on another by antique cottages, and on a third, as an anti-climax, by the only symptom of the 19th century visible—the arches of the Blackwall Railway. I seemed to leave the waking world behind and pass into the region of dreamland, as the wicket closed. It reminded me forcibly of scenes in Dickens's 'Old Curiosity Shop.' Nor was the effect removed when the minister presented himself at my summons. A venerable scholar-like old man, arrayed in clerical black, and with a long white beard, received me most courteously, and begged me to wait in the vestry until service time. Here we engaged in conversation, and I found that this is the only place of worship for the particular body in London; there being, in fact, only one other in England. On the wall was a tablet referring to a fire which had occurred here in 1690, when the meeting-house was rebuilt. In this fire, the minister told me, a large

and valuable collection of MSS. of the Sacred Text had been lost—a loss he was doing his best to retrieve by making another collection. Mr. Black also informed me that the body of Seventh-day Baptists, though so small in point of numbers in England, is largely represented in America, where the University of Alfred belongs to them, and two colleges. Their journal is the 'Sabbath-day Recorder;' a copy of which he presented to me. While engaged in conversation of this kind, the hour for service drew on. I noticed that Mr. Black bore with him, for use in the pulpit, a Greek Harmony of the Gospels with a Latin running commentary. I certainly had not been prepared for this. I expected to find some illiterate minister, with a hobby ridden to death, when lo! I found myself in the presence of a profound scholar and most courteous gentleman, who informed me that he thought in Latin, said his prayers in Hebrew, and read his New Testament lessons from the original Greek! I then went into the chapel, which was small and in poor repair. The congregation only numbered fourteen persons besides myself, the minister, and clerk, to wit, six men, five women, and three children. I shall give the particulars of the service in detail, for they were very curious.

Proceedings commenced with a short extempore

prayer and hymn, after which a portion of the 119th Psalm was read. I was informed that every service comprised one of the divisions of this Psalm, a portion of the Law, of the Prophets, and of the Book of the Revelation. The portion of the Psalm was given out under its Hebrew letter-title, "letter Vau," and the authorship of the Psalm was attributed to Daniel. I could not help noticing, throughout the whole service, the boldness and freedom of Mr. Black's criticisms. The portion of the Law read was the faithfulness of Phinehas; and the effect of the Hebrew pronunciation of the proper names was curious in the extreme. Long quotations were also given in the sacred language, and quite a lengthy discussion was introduced on the subject of the "dimidiated Vau!" It seemed incredible that the congregation could follow this. They did not look learned; but their attention did not flag—as yet. The portion of the Prophets was selected from the book of Judges; which Mr. Black includes among the prophetical writings. Then was read Psalm 91 in free translation. It was treated as a prayer of Moses at the ordination of Joshua, though it is one of the Psalms bearing no title. A second version of the same Psalm in blank verse was also read by Mr. Black, with considerable elocutionary power. A metrical

version of Psalm 19 by Dr. Watts was then sung, without accompaniment, very fairly, considering the smallness of the congregation. After this followed a long exposition of Mark xii., which was first read in Archbishop Newcome's translation. Here Mr. Black brought his classical learning to bear, as he had up to this time his Rabbinical. For instance, he argued that the "Herodians," generally regarded as a political faction, were simply the soldiers and attendants of Herod who had accompanied him to the Passover, and were called "Herodiani" just as Pompey's men were called "Pompeiani." Here, again, the use of classical terms and foreign pronunciation was very remarkable; as, for instance, "Render to Kaisar the things that are Kaisar's;" "Fetch me a denarius." It was shown that it was a denarius and not the shekel that pointed the moral of this conversation; as the shekel would have had no "image" upon it, such being contrary to the law. Mr. Black evidently thought strongly on this point. "Never would Jews or Mahometans put image of man on their coins," he said; "it is only Christians who dare do this." Passing on to the Sadducee's question about the Resurrection, he treated the answer of Jesus, based on the quotation from "The Bush" as "altogether unsatisfactory." It was an

argumentum ad hominem, however—a fighting the enemy with his own weapons. So, too, in the summary of duty given to the Scribes, the two great commandments were not designed to supersede others, but were "extensive principles underlying all special law." In verse 35, again, where Jesus applied to Himself the quotation from the Psalms, "The Lord said unto my Lord," etc., Mr. Black's criticism would have made an orthodox divine shiver in his shoes. In the first place, he said, the Psalm was not David's, but attributed to David, and probably was written by Nathan. "My Lord," in fact, was David. Secondly, it had no more reference to Jesus of Nazareth "than to you or me." It referred to the expected Messiah. It was, again, an instance of Jesus's arguing on admitted principles. The exposition concluded with Rabbinical and classical passages illustrating the episode of the Widow's Mite. He concluded by a very telling comparison. "It is just as though some one should come and drop into the box, one by one, ostentatiously, a string of Chinese coins. All would amount to little, though they made a great noise and display. And then some one came and dropped in quietly a dollar, worth more than all, though given so modestly. So was this widow's mite."

Upon this followed a reading of the "50th section of the Apocalypse." It commenced at the 10th verse of our 21st chapter, and embraced the description of the New Jerusalem. Mr. Black treats the accepted date of the Book of Revelation as erroneous, and places it in the reign of Nero. This particular prophecy he regards as the complement of the end of Ezekiel. The tone of this part of the service struck me as almost Swedenborgian. Then followed a long and eloquent extempore prayer. There were, in fact, some noble passages here, quite free from all sectarian bias, and breathing the very widest charity. He prayed for blessing "on all honest and sincere persons of whatever nation or profession: for Jews and Mahomedans and Christians: for the raising up of reformers: and that all may be fitted for a nobler and purer state of society, and have their share in the First Resurrection."

It was now 4.30 p.m., the service having commenced at three, and I really fancied all was over; when, to my surprise, "here followed the sermon." The text (Matthew xxv. 28, and two following verses) was read, first in free translation, and then in the ancient Greek, with modern or Romaic pronunciation. This, it should be mentioned, was part of a course on the "Harmony of the Gospels," commenced eight

years since. A former course, on a like subject, occupied the same preacher fifteen years! A course on Systematic Theology, commenced two years and a half ago, and, according to the published programme, embracing seven lectures, has not yet advanced to the end of No. 1. They do not do things in a hurry at Mill Yard. The sermon, which I must analyse very briefly, though it occupied nearly an hour, commenced by an explanation of the expression, "The Kingdom of Heaven." That kingdom is present. "It is the fifth great monarchy spoken of by Daniel." Every human being is responsible to the Ruler of the Universe for all "talents." That expression has passed into common language from this parable. When we die punishment *immediately* ensues upon misuse. There is no interval. The next moment of consciousness is resurrection. "The wicked die again, and *die in pain.*" There, nominal religion is no good. To tell people it is so is only like the story of the French King, who was calmed by the assurance that God could not possibly turn out from heaven so *perfect a gentleman* as his Majesty. [At this period of the discourse, I am sorry to say, most of the female portion of the small congregation fell asleep, the children undisguisedly having a game among the hassocks.] The

preacher then passed on to mention certain local particulars relating to some malversation of the funds of the chapel, and his remarks were exceedingly severe. In fact, his earnestness elevated his style into something of the dignity of an old Scotch Covenanter. "Note what has been the case with our persecutors for the last two hundred years," he said. "Our prayers are heard, and *down they go.* May it be so now. It will be as long as we are faithful." But little allusion was made to the Seventh-day Sabbath. England, he said, was least observant of this. "Abroad I find churches always open, and I go into monasteries and Catholic shrines, and say my prayers in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin." "Saturday is still the Sabbath in common law. If Parliament sat on Saturday its proceedings would be noted 'Sabbati.' It is only in statute law that Sunday is made the Sabbath." "The Reformation is but a thing of yesterday. We go back to British—nay, to Roman times!" A tract has been published by Mr. Black, entitled "Plain Reasons for the Religious Observance of the Seventh-day Sabbath (commonly called Saturday), as perpetually binding upon all Christians, published for 'promoting the cause of Truth,' by the ancient Sabbath-keeping Congregation in Mill Yard, Goodman's Fields." Of course the strong point is

the retention of the Fourth Commandment, enjoining the observance of the Jewish Sabbath in the moral code of Christianity. The whole *brochure*, however, is full of interest; placing the subject learnedly, and with all the force of conviction, before the reader.

I must not forget to mention that Mr. Black is a poet—and one of the *irritabile genus vatum*—too. A dignitary of the Metropolitan Cathedral ventured on the assertion that Mr. Black had sought to join the Jews. The "Jewish Journals" repudiated the assertion, and Mr. Black—I suppress lines that contain names or personalities—thus unburthened himself:—

"Quoth ——, 'Twere capital fun
In London's cathedral to be a great gun:
To gain such preferment, quite certain I feel
That the readiest way is Dominical zeal.

"'The Puritan writers I'll slaughter and slash—
Their doctrines are easily proved to be trash;
But those simple people that meet at Mill Yard,
To confute, I confess, is tremendously hard.

"'Then I'll try to despatch them at once, being few,
By pretending their teacher, that Black, is a Jew.'
* * * * * *

"Resolved on his purpose, he comes out in print,
Is a Canon install'd, and has gold from the Mint."
* * * * * *

I came away impressed with the idea that this was among the strangest of my experiences in Unorthodox

London. Shall I add another "idea" also?—that it would be no harm if some of our Sunday preachers would take a quiet run out on Saturday to Goodman's Fields, and carry away an original notion or two from the "Prælectiones Theologicæ Miliarenses" and "Prælectiones Evangelicæ Hebdomadales"—as they are headed in the programmes—of the Seventh-day Baptist minister, William Henry Black, F.S.A.

Mr. Black has died since the above article was written; but the worship of the Seventh-Day Baptists is still continued in Mill Yard.

THE CHRISTADELPHIANS.

THE curious inquirer into the phenomena of religious life in London will find his sphere of observation greatly enlarged by a visit to the meeting-place of the Christadelphians, which, at the time of writing this paper, was a dancing academy, near the Gower Street station of the Underground Railway, but which has since been removed to the less festive region of Wellington Hall, Wellington Street, Upper Street, Islington. Nine persons out of ten will open their eyes at this portentous title, exclaiming, "What! yet another sect?" They will therefore, in all probability, grow inquisitive, and find that their neighbour, No. 10, knows little more than themselves about the matter. They will probably wax etymological, and delude themselves with the

idea that Christadelphian means "brethren in Christ," and is therefore, so to say, only Christian "writ large," and consequently a title which they could share in common with those who have adopted it as their distinctive appellation. Nay, it is even possible that a visit or two to the Christadelphian "Ecclesia" will leave them comparatively in the dark; for the doctrines professed by the Christadelphians do not crop up at the surface of their religious practice, as embodied in worship, to the extent that we might expect, especially when we learn from other sources their violently revolutionary character.

After paying several visits to the humble "Ecclesia," I confess to having failed to grasp the faintest outline of the doctrines professed by that body. That refuge of the destitute, the library of the British Museum, did not enlighten me; nay, even the omniscient gentlemen in the centre of the reading room, who are ever so courteously ready to give information on all subjects, from the copyright of 'Cock Robin' to a critical question in a Greek play —even these failed me. I am informed that, since the original appearance of this article, the defect has been remedied; Christadelphian books are no longer among the *libri desiderati*, but such was the case when I first instituted my inquiry among the officials

of our national museum. The name of Christadelphian was to them unknown. Again I attended the morning "breaking of bread," at eleven on Sunday, and felt very much like an interloper, whilst some fifty *habitués*, mostly of the humbler class, offered up their simple prayer and praise, preached in turn their plain practical sermons, and partook, after their own homely fashion, of the bread and wine. I went on Sunday evening, as requested, "with my Bible in my hand," to "hear the truth," and very solid truths I did hear, but nothing distinctive, nothing that might not have been preached in any church or chapel of London, orthodox or unorthodox. I attended a week-day lecture—still at the same place—on the subject of "New Jerusalem, where and what it is," and came away without having gleaned much more than the idea that it was to be the veritable Old Jerusalem restored and inhabited by the saints. Of the terms of saintship I learned comparatively nothing. It was only by placing myself in communication with one of the body that I gained particulars of the history of Christadelphianism, and access to its somewhat voluminous but decidedly recondite literature.

To an outsider—and it will presently appear in what an overwhelming majority we poor outsiders are—the meeting-place of the Christadelphians pre-

sents no appreciable difference from that of the Plymouth Brethren. It resembles that sect precisely in the fact, for instance, of having no president or minister—the "brethren" officiating in turn; as also in the sharp line of demarcation between the initiated and the profane, making an unfortunate outsider feel in a veritable minority of one on the occasion of his visits; while the ceremony of communion is so exactly similar as to render it worth the consideration of the Christadelphians whether some distinctive mark should not be adopted to enable the uninformed to recognize the difference between themselves and those sects all of which they so utterly condemn and repudiate. The Christadelphian position will be best understood from an abridgment of an interesting document, drawn up for my special behoof by one of themselves, to whom, after wading through volumes of doctrinal and controversial matter, I applied in despair of gaining anything like an historical idea of the body, or its connection with other religious denominations.

The Christadelphians, he informed me, date their origin back to the first century. They claim, as the name Χριστοῦ ἀδελφοί implies, to be brethren *of* Christ, —not *in* Christ, as I had imagined. The first Christadelphians, therefore, he argues, were the

Apostles. As to the history of the Christadelphian body during the centuries from the first to the nineteenth, little definite information can be given. The truth taught by Christ and the Apostles did not long continue to be held and set forth in its purity. The Christadelphians of the first century were soon lost in the general body of those who embraced the mixture of Divine truth and Pagan philosophy which gained currency, and which my informant terms "Paganised Christianity." The first step which was made towards rescuing the truth from the obscurity into which it had been brought by the Church of Rome was the Reformation; but this, though leading to the repudiation of some errors, and to the establishment of some truths, failed, according to Christadelphian ideas, to establish the truth apostolically delivered. Subsequent steps towards the accomplishment of such an end have been, they say, the secessions from the Established Church of England, and the establishment of various dissenting bodies. These have assisted in bringing out isolated truths, but are still far from the possession of the whole truth. Christadelphianism alone exhausts truth.

The revival of the body in the present century has been effected through the instrumentality of John Thomas, M.D., the son of a Baptist minister who

resided in London some forty years since. Dr. Thomas emigrated to America in the year 1632, with the intention of practising medicine in the United States. During the voyage, while placed in circumstances of great danger, he resolved that, if ever he reached *terra firma* again, he would not rest until he had found the truth, of which he then felt himself ignorant. Shortly after his arrival in the United States, he joined the Campbellites, and was pressed by them, against his will, into speaking and preaching. This led him to study the Scriptures closely, and various difficulties presented themselves to his mind, in the shape of apparent inconsistencies in the popular theology. He continued his investigations, and, his belief assuming a definite form, quite opposed to popular religion, he left the Campbellites, and propagated his belief by speaking and writing. This resulted in the formation of a number of churches (or as they—adopting the Greek word—term them "ecclesias") which subsequently adopted the name, "Christadelphian," as an alternative to the title of Thomasites. The Christadelphians, however, whilst thus incidentally connected with the Campbellites, disclaim "emanation" from any religious body. They consist, they say, of individuals gathered from

almost every other denomination, as well as of those who were formerly sceptics. There are some forty regular meetings of Christadelphians in this country; but the body, besides being rigidly exclusive, is far from numerous. Dr. Thomas died in March, 1871.

Of Christadelphian doctrines the most concise summary is found in a little pamphlet bearing the title of "A Declaration of the First Principles of the Oracles of the Deity, set forth in a series of propositions demonstrating that the Faith of Christendom is made up of the Fables predicted by Paul (2 Timothy iv. 4), and entirely subversive of the Faith once for all delivered to the saints." Thus the hand of the Christadelphian is, like the Ishmaelite's, "against every man." The name of a Brother of Christ would seem rather to imply comprehensiveness than the reverse; and it is, in fact, curious to notice how, in these Thirty-six propositions, the Christadelphian does really manage to exhaust almost every form of heresy—and thus, while fancying himself exclusive, to become, in point of fact, simply eclectic. The kingdom of God is defined (Art. III.) as "a Divine Political Dominion to be established on earth," with the object of upsetting and superseding all existing governments. Its seat is to be Jerusalem, and its establishment preceded by a return of the Jews to

Palestine. Jerusalem is then to be the "Queen-city of the world, the residence of the Lord Jesus, the head-quarters and metropolis of the kingdom of God, whose dominion will stretch to the utmost bounds of the globe." This kingdom of God will last a thousand years, during which Christ and his saints will rule the mortal nations of the earth, sin and death continuing in a milder form than now. At the end of this period Christ will surrender his power to God; an extensive revolt of the nations will take place, to be suppressed by a summary outburst of judgment. Then will occur a resurrection and judgment of those who have died during the thousand years, and a judging of those who are alive at the end of that period, resulting in the immortalisation of the approved and the annihilation of the rejected. These righteous redeemed immortal persons will inhabit the earth for ever.

So far the position is a blending of Judaism with Chiliasm.

The immortality of the soul, says the Christadelphian, is "a Pagan fiction." Man is altogether mortal; his *life* the same as that of animals; and his "faculties the attributes of his bodily organization," by virtue of which he is superior to animals. In the death-state he is "utterly unconscious;" and the re-

surrection is therefore an absolute necessity to a future life. Immortality can only be obtained through Christ, by believing God's promises and obeying His commandments, and is to be bestowed by Christ at his second coming, when he will raise and gather together such of the dead as have been, and such of the living as are, responsible to God's law, punishing the wicked with many or few stripes ending in the second death, or absolute destruction (there is no "eternal torment") and rewarding the righteous by bestowing on them immortality of body: "immortality of life manifested through *an undecaying body.*" All these immortals are to reign with Christ on the earth,—not in heaven, which they say the Bible nowhere promises. The popular theory of hell is also "a fiction" derived from Paganism, the "hell" of the Scriptures in many cases being simply the grave, and in others *Gehenna*, "a locality in the land of Israel, which was, in past times, the scene of judicial inflictions, and which is again to become so on a larger scale." The Devil of popular theology is, according to them, a myth: there is no such superhuman agent of evil. "The Devil is a Scriptural personification of sin in the flesh, in its several phases of manifestation,—subjective, individual, aggregate, social, and political, in history, current experience,

and prophecy." There are no disembodied spirits—either human or superhuman.

They maintain the Unity of God,—in opposition to the doctrine of the Trinity,—and that the Spirit is not a personal God distinct from the Father, but that the Father dwells in heaven, and that the Spirit is "the instrumental power of the Father, radiant from his person," and by which he fills universal space. With regard to Jesus Christ, though denying him to be "very God," or co-eternal with the Father, they equally disavow Unitarian doctrine, for they believe in his preternatural begettal by the Holy Spirit; that the Spirit dwelt in him without measure; that his death, as a sacrifice for sin, is an indispensable part of the plan of salvation; and that he is now *in nature* equal with God, and that he is acting as a mediator for "those who come unto God by him." They say he was not the "eternal Son of God" manifested in flesh, but *God* manifest in the flesh, the result of this manifestation being the Son of God.

"Baptism," they add, "is *immersion* in water, not sprinkling, and should not be administered to infants, but only to believers. To such it is the means of union with Christ, and "is, therefore, necessary to salvation."

Such are a few of the tremendous clauses of the Christadelphian creed. It is a wonderful proof how much better most of us are than our beliefs, that one could go into the little humble "Ecclesia" at the Gower Street Dancing Academy, and come away without an inkling of these astounding doctrines. I was amazed to hear working men read and expound from their thumbed Bibles, showing the most complete familiarity with the sacred text. I listened to their sermons and lectures, and thought how well it was for them to be there, since very possibly more elaborate faiths would have failed to comprehend them. I joined in the singing of their simple hymns, and looked on at their homely breaking of bread, not without thoughts that it might typify more nearly than gorgeous rituals the original Supper. It was weeks and months before I gathered the tenets of their marvellous symbolism, and I could not but think as I did so, that after all their differences were mostly on paper; whilst in faith and practice I could trace no collision between them and many a sect with which my examinations have brought me into contact. I believe, if pushed home, the Christadelphian body would hardly consign all of us, except its very select numbers, even to annihilation—they charitably forego perdition. It may

be that they would return an answer as liberal as any other body by nature sectarian to the demand which the very first "Christadelphians" themselves put to the Master, "*Are there* few that be saved?"

A MORAVIAN SERVICE.

"REFORMERS before the Reformation" would form a fitting title for that remarkable body, representatives of the most ancient form of Protestantism, who are usually styled Moravians, from the geographical position of one of their centres of influence, but whose self-adopted title is "Unitas Fratrum—The Unity of the Brethren." Though numbering only some three hundred out of as many millions in our metropolis, and being gathered in only one congregation—that of Fetter Lane Chapel—still there are many points connected with their history, doctrines, and discipline, which render this religious body especially interesting. The actual origin of the Moravians dates back as far as the year 1457, when some of the followers of John Huss organised a Church system, with episcopal

government and orders, and a strict discipline. Stamped out by Papal persecution, the society became extinct, or at all events dormant, in the year 1627; and it was not until the commencement of the eighteenth century that it revived under the auspices of the well-known Count Zinzendorf. Beneath his patronage and subsequent episcopate, the society revived at Herrnhut as its head-quarters. The first mission to England was sent in 1728, at the request of the Countess Schaumberg-Lippe, a German lady attached to the retinue of the Queen of George II.; and by the end of the year 1749 an Act was passed recognizing them as a Protestant Episcopal Church, and securing to them civil and religious privileges, with special reference to their settlements and missionary operations in the British colonies. The present chapel in Fetter Lane was taken in the year 1740, when their previous place of meeting proved too small. It was in this chapel that Richard Baxter had formerly ministered; and to this—armed only with the postal information that it lay between 32 and 33 Fetter Lane—I adjourned on a Sunday morning to gain my first ideas of the externals of Moravianism.

The chapel is plain in the extreme; and the first impressions I received on entering it were the com-

parative emptiness of the benches and the cordial welcome I received from the chirpy old lady at the door, who, in reply to my demand whether strangers were admissible, replied, "Oh, yes! we are always glad to see them," and handed me a prayer and hymn book labelled "For Visitors," as though she had really expected me. I mention this, which may seem a trifling incident, because in my peregrinations among the different representatives of "Unorthodox London," it is far from being always or often the case. I have too often found myself, as a stranger, looked on almost with suspicion, as though one necessarily came to criticise and cavil, instead of being engaged in the task of respectfully noticing those differences of doctrine and practice which, whilst they form a most interesting branch of study, certainly need not be a source of distrust or heart-burnings between man and man. There was nothing of this kind at the Moravian Chapel in Fetter Lane. The visitor, be he who he may, is at once made at home. The congregation was very small indeed, numbering at no time during the service, I should think, more than thirty. The sexes are separated, just as at the Ritualistic churches; and I think I was right in counting only thirteen on the women's side, including my good-natured old pew-opener. The

ning service, at which a prescribed form of prayer used (that for the evening being extempore), sists mainly of a litany, a little longer, perhaps, n that of the Church of England, and embracing eral suffrages coincident therewith. After reading n the pulpit a sentence from Scripture, exactly as the Church of England, the minister recites the d's Prayer, and then proceeds to intone, with an accompaniment and somewhat ornate inflec- ns, the opening sentences of the Litany. The ct of this sudden transition from reading to ning is very striking; and the passages were en with great effect by the Rev. A. C. Hassé, the nister of the congregation. I had been prepared the Moravians being great in hymnody; but this si-choral element in the service, generally sup- ed incompatible with advanced Protestantism, ick me forcibly. The main portion of the Litany , however, read. But here again a remarkable ct was produced by the insertion, at frequent ervals, of portions of hymns or of a chorale, the lody of which strongly reminded one of "Luther's mn," or "Ein feste Burg." The congregation s not large, it is true, but every person sang, and men gave the not always easy harmonies with at correctness and unmistakable energy, singing

being a very strong point indeed with the Brethren. Two Scripture lessons, separated by a hymn, and followed by the 'Te Deum," closed the actual service. The Old Testament lesson on the occasion when I was present was 2 Chronicles xv., and that from the New Testament James iv., the text of the sermon being selected from the former, 2 Chron. xv. 2: "The Lord is with you while ye be with him, and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you." To my great disappointment, I found that, instead of being in any way distinctive, the discourse was on the subject of the Stockwell tragedy. This was the more unfortunate, as the 15th of October is an interesting anniversary in the annals of the Moravian Church in England. On that day, in the year 1671, just two hundred years before my visit to Fetter Lane, died the learned Moravian Bishop, J. A. Comenius, who was sent for by the English Government in 1641 with the view of effecting an improvement of the educational system in the English universities and schools. The troubles between the King and Parliament prevented the scheme from being carried out, but his stay in England inspired Comenius with such love for her National Church that "he felt no hesitation in commending to her fostering care his own beloved but

then scattered Church, the oldest of the daughters of the Reformation—nay, which anticipated Luther's great movement by sixty years." One would have thought the celebration of such an anniversary more congenial with the spirit of the former occupant of that pulpit—the stout old Puritan who wrote the "Saints' Everlasting Rest"—than the morbid details of the last new slaughter. Not so, however, thought the Rev. A. C. Hassé. The entire service concluded with a very brief extempore prayer and the blessing.

Failing to learn any particulars of the faith or practice of this body from the sermon on this occasion, I had to throw myself on the courtesy of the minister, who supplied me with a copy of the only kind of "test" required from members of the congregations. It is called "The Brotherly Agreement, or Declarations and Rules agreed to by the Members of the Brethren's Congregations in Great Britain and Ireland." As a summary of such doctrines it may be said that they acknowledge Holy Scripture as the only rule of faith and practice, laying emphasis on the doctrine of the atonement "as being the centre and sum of all saving truth." On the subject of discipline in individuals, the 11th article of the "Brotherly Agreement" says: "Convinced of the weakness and depravity of the human heart, we will,

through grace, watch over our own hearts, flee from temptation, and avoid whatever is likely to be a snare or stumbling-block to others. We regard it as inconsistent with our principles to attend balls, dances, theatres, and similar places of worldly amusement." Very many funny things have been said about Moravian marriages, and the awful risks run in that body by couples being paired off by the elders after the casting of lots. It seems, however, that in this most delicate of all matters, just as in the carrying out of many other almost equally delicate details in the "Brotherly Agreement," little authority is exercised beyond the giving of judicious advice. The Moravians have, in this respect, kept something like pace with the times, at all events.

With regard to general discipline, Synods form the legislative, and Boards of Elders the executive powers. The Unity consists of three provinces—Germany, Great Britain, and North America, each with its Provincial Synod. The orders are Episcopal, consisting of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons; but the Bishops of the Moravian Church differ from those of the Establishment in having no special locality assigned to them. I find four English Bishops signing the Pastoral for the present year, "addressed by direction of the Provincial Synod assembled at

Fulneck, in June and July, 1871, to the Brethren's Congregations in Great Britain and Ireland."

Whilst the Moravian body, then, presents us with a very pretty model in miniature of a system of ecclesiastical discipline closely analogous to our own, there are two particulars in which it has developed itself far beyond all proportion to its scantiness in point of numbers and resources. These are its foreign missions and its educational work. Beside its Scripture Readers' Society in the North of Ireland, and Home Mission in North America and England, and the extensive *diaspora* work (as it is termed) of evangelising among the National Protestant Churches on the continent of Europe, it can boast of having carried on more extensive mission work among the heathen than any other religious body. The fields of labour are the West Indies, Surinam, the Mosquito Coast, South Africa, the North American Indians, Greenland, Labrador, the aborigines of Australia and Central Asia. There are at present 15 mission districts, 87 mission stations, 319 agents, and 1,101 native assistants. This work required, in 1867, an outlay of £15,800, to be met by subscriptions from home. Truly one may well be puzzled, when visiting the tiny chapel and congregation in Fetter Lane, to guess where the English metropolitan quota comes

from. There are, on the European continent, 15 "settlements" or villages, almost solely inhabited by members of the Church, and several "town" congregations. These embrace together above 6,000 members. In Great Britain and Ireland there are four larger settlements, and 34 congregations, with 5,522 members. In North America there are 43 congregations, with over 11,000 members. The chapel in Fetter Lane is, as I have already said, the only one in London, its number of communicants being 150 out of a total of 300 Moravians in the metropolis and environs. The training institution for teachers and ministers is at Fulneck in Yorkshire, and there are several large boarding schools connected with the body in different parts of England.

If any one, tired of the unromantic routine of the present, wishes to throw himself back in imagination a few Christian centuries, he may do worse some Sunday morning than confide himself to the motherly care of the good old pew-opener at the little Moravian Chapel in Fetter Lane. There he shall hear the quaint old chorales which carry him back to the days of Luther and Huss—nay, the familiar talk of "Agapæ," or "Love-feasts," bear him back to an epoch earlier still and nearer the source of the Church's history. He may—if there chance not

to be a Stockwell tragedy on the *tapis*—hear an eloquent discourse on Christian morals, and he will come away edified both by sermon and service, even if he is not able to go quite as far as enthusiastic John Wesley, who, in his first experiences of Moravianism, exclaimed, "God has given me the desire of my heart. I am with a church whose conversation is in heaven, in whom is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walked as he walked. As they all have one Lord and one faith, so they are all partakers of one spirit—the spirit of meekness and love."

FATHER IGNATIUS "AT HOME."

At no period of history, probably, since the schools of religion and philosophy jostled one another in the streets of Alexandria, have the forms of religious life been more exuberant and diversified than in London at the present time. To mention only the most prominent—quite apart from recognized sects or bodies, however unorthodox—we have the strangest spectacles of groups of religionists gathering round a single teacher, or linked together by a common sentiment, which would scarcely appear capable of forming a nucleus of spiritual life. Mr. Bradlaugh disavowing the negative creed of Atheism, dispenses to his hearers the novel doctrines of Anti-Theism. Mr. Peebles, at the Cavendish Rooms, succeeding to the mantle of Mrs. Emma Hardinge, discourses of Spirit-

ualism to the accompaniment of approving raps, presumably from Hades. At St. George's Hall, philosophers lecture in the afternoon on the Deep Sea, and on Parasitic Animals, whilst, in the evening, ladies discourse sweetly of Shelley, to the accompaniment of "a band and chorus of 150 performers." Ned Wright, in the Gospel Hall, tries to reclaim his quondam associates, and last, not least, the Reverend Father Ignatius, having metamorphosed to that time-honoured title his mundane appellation of the Rev. Francis Lyne—throws open the doors of his "Benedictine Monastery," No. 51, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, and, by public advertisement, invites the curious or the sympathising to hear him unburthen himself on a Saturday evening.

Attracted by the invitation, I presented myself at that most unmonastic-looking abode, and, on knocking at the front door, was admitted by a thoroughly secular boy, monastic only in his palpable aversion to soap, who desired me to mount to the drawing-room floor. In that apartment I found myself nearly "Jack among the maidens," in a congregation scarcely exceeding half a hundred, but still filling the forms in the Benedictine *salon*. The front row was occupied by some dozen females in a quasi-religious costume of dark gown and white cap, something like

those honest affairs servant-girls used to wear before the present apologies came in with chignons. What these people may be I have no notion. They ranged from girls in their teens to women of forty, and looked to me exceedingly out of order in a monastery. But "*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*" Perhaps they were there to sing. They warbled like nightingales. In the small back drawing-room—and it was, as the theatrical gentleman in 'Nicholas Nickleby' says, "pernicious snug"—was fitted up a small altar on a footpace, with large crucifix and six composite candles. Soon after my arrival, the dirty page, now gorgeous in scarlet cassock, and surplice that would have shocked the Lord Chamberlain by its brevity, lighted up. There was a good deal of running up and down stairs on the part of the cœnobite brethren, but soon a procession entered, consisting of the Rev. W. A. Shoults, arrayed in lace skirt and surplice, the scarlet acolyte with censer, three or four very juvenile-looking brethren, with their extinguisher cowls sticking strangely up above their heads, and last, but not least, Father Ignatius himself, in the garb of his order, and looking, from his emaciated face down to his sandalled feet, every inch a "priest all shaven and shorn." A service was then commenced, consisting of any number of psalms, with

curious interpolations of melody, which nobody understood but Ignatius himself; the officiating priest least of all, for he had to be prompted continually by the "superior." The people in the room had books; but nobody near me had the faintest conception of what was going on. Then the resplendent page came and put a blue cloak on Mr. Shoults, handing him the censer at the same time. He was not *au fait* at swinging this at all, and once or twice I thought he would have thrown it into the congregation, and hurt some of us. As it was, he nearly poisoned us with the fumes; and there was an interval of coughing for several minutes, until somebody reasoned with him, and he desisted. Father Ignatius then offered an extempore prayer, and, as he *posed* himself to do so, one could not but be conscious of the picturesqueness of the situation. There is considerable sweetness in the young monk's face, but the expression of that, and the prayer he said, were tinged with just the slightest degree of affectation. Still, "honour to whom honour is due;" it was an utterance that showed him thoroughly in earnest, though some of us may deem him mistaken. After partaking, *coram populo*, of light refreshment, in the shape of a glass of sherry, and bearing more than his share in a beautiful hymn, sung by all the congregation, he girded up his loins and commenced his sermon.

Standing at the folding-doors of the back drawing-room, he read the words, from the narrative of Paul's shipwreck, in the Acts of the Apostles, "Whose I am and whom I serve;" and after picturing vividly the horrors of that night on the deep, when Euroclydon swept the stormy waves, he proceeded to apply the two clauses of the text to the cases of his congregation, whom, I was somewhat startled to find, he regarded as all "elect saints." This was certainly not stipulated in the advertisement, or I should not have ventured to come; but so it was. Father Ignatius informed us that he was far more Christ's than the Archangels Gabriel, Michael, or Raphael—nay, that we ourselves were, being "blood-bought," whilst they were only created. The style of the subsequent discourse may best be described as an evident copy of Mr. Spurgeon, equalling his eccentricities, but only faintly approaching his power. In truth, the Reverend Father seemed to me sometimes to shave the very edges of profanity. For instance, he spoke of himself as "having pawned himself in the devil's pawnshop, till Christ came and took him out!" "Do you know," he added, "I often think Christ must *have very bad taste* to choose a poor wretch like me." Without at all quarrelling with the sentiment, this seemed to me a strong way of expressing it.

"Whom I serve," he kept on repeating over and over again—"whom I serve! Would you mind all standing up and repeating those words after me—whose I am, and whom I serve?" So up we all got, and said them like infants at school. "Troubles," he exclaimed, "troubles drop off the saint, like water off a duck's back." "I always feel tempted to say funny things when I'm preaching, and it appears to me when I haven't been thinking of Christ I get a fit of *spiritual indigestion.*" Some saints were so overcome, we were informed, by a sense of their own unworthiness of God's love, that they were obliged to cry out, "No don't, Lord; please don't, this is too much."

Will Mr. Lyne permit one who recognizes considerable power and sincerity in his preaching to repeat that observation to him? This *is* really too much. Without for one moment upholding the style deprecated by Sydney Smith, of clinging to the MS. sermon and velvet cushion of the pulpit, one would venture to quote another authority perhaps scarcely recognized by Father Ignatius, and expostulate, in the words of Sam Slick, "This is coming it *rayther* too strong." After the sermon came a collection; and the Reverend Father showed that he knew how to combine with the harmlessness of the dove the wisdom of the serpent, by naïvely remarking that in

future, at his Sunday evening service in Store Street Hall, the collection would *precede* the sermon, as some people who came there evidently thought he ought to pay the rent as well as preach to them. After this we subsided into informality. A clergyman present, whose name I did not catch, offered an extempore prayer, looking somewhat incongruous in his nineteenth century attire, by the side of the Benedictine brothers in their habits, and Mr. Shoults in his lace skirts, not forgetting the red page with the censer. This clergyman, it seems, had come to look up male teachers for his Sunday schools, and Father Ignatius put it to us individually whether we could devote an hour or two to such an excellent purpose. I informed him that I had other pressing occupations. I went downstairs, and was struck as I passed by the particularly cosy and unmonastic aspect of the parlour on the ground floor, in and out of which the white caps were flitting. And as I went out at the street door, memory seemed to take me back a step further still—to the time when I was a "little tiny boy," and one of my favourite pursuits with my brothers and sisters —so is the child the father of the man!—was *playing at church.*

AMONG THE "JOANNAS."

SOME religious bodies appear destined, in the nature of things, as well as in the name of common sense, to die out and become obsolete. Foremost among such are the followers of Joanna Southcott. Originating towards the end of the last century with an old woman's assumption of immaculate conception, it would appear that, when her followers' hopes were disappointed by her speedy death and irrefragable medical testimony that her symptoms of impending maternity were only, like Queen Mary's, dropsical, the sect must have at once and for ever collapsed. But fanaticism has within it a more than feline tenacity of life. The sect lived on, and explained away the failure of its hopes, notwithstanding the extravagant *layette* that had been prepared for the expected

Shiloh, by saying that a spiritual, not a material birth was contemplated. It was, however, I own, with some surprise I learnt that this body had still "a local habitation and a name" within the world's metropolis in this nineteenth century.

Acting on information I had received I betook me to Westmoreland Road, Walworth, where I had been informed the followers of Joanna assembled at the house of one Peacock, a cooper; but I found that owing to the Walworth Common Improvements, Westmoreland Road—at least, the Westmoreland Road of Peacock the cooper—was rapidly becoming a thing of the past. Trim little twenty-pound-a-year villas, with peagreen Venetian blinds, were everywhere rising up on the ruins of old Westmoreland Road, which stood bare, like an Australian clearing, with only here and there a patch of the old fusty habitations that had preceded the Venetian-blind epoch. I put a question to a passing policeman as to where the followers of Joanna Southcott met. From the peculiarity of the Christian name, which was historically unfamiliar to him, I am inclined to believe that the officer thought I was poking fun; but finding me in earnest, he confessed entire ignorance of the body, and referred me for information to a watchman who was contemplatively smoking his

Sunday morning pipe, like Marius among the ruins of the ancient Westmoreland Road. Marius knew all about the Saints and the cooper; and I followed his direction implicitly, but only, alas! to find that the "Joannas," as they were universally called in the locality, had "moved on." After diligently inquiring at chandlers' shops, which were all in full swing that Sabbath morn in Walworth, and of twenty-pound householders airing themselves on their doorsteps, I at length spotted Mr. Peacock's cooperage at 97, Trafalgar Street, around which I found I had been infructuously describing a circle. I went to Peacock's side door, and found the knocker diligently pegged down so as to be impracticable; and was fain to state my difficulty to a huckster opposite, who assured me Peacock was at home, and advised me to try my knuckles. The Joannas, he said, met there. They were quiet folks, and never made no noise, but he could tell me no more, as he did not belong to them. In response to my knuckles a man emerged from the shopdoor, and at once introduced me to the inside of Mr. Peacock's house; while from a back parlour emerged the head and shirt-sleeves of Mr. Peacock himself, who appeared to be in the act of enjoying a Sunday scrub-up. On my stating that I wished to attend a meeting of the followers of Joanna Southcott,

he said that I was rightly informed such meetings took place there. The Saints, he added, had been a good deal "drove about" by the Walworth Improvements, which he seemed to consider in the light of a special machination of Satan, and spent most of their time in "mourning and lamentation," a fact at which, I, of course, expressed my sympathetic sorrow. All this colloquy took place whilst I was standing in a dark passage between the shop and back parlour, with the head and shirt-sleeves of Mr. Peacock protruding from the half-opened door. At length I heard a voice, which I fancied was a female one, suggesting that I should be asked in; and with an apology for the smallness of the gathering and the humble character of the sanctum, Mr. Peacock owned the soft impeachment that a meeting was even now going on, and, having opened the door and handed me a chair, he returned to an operation my advent had interrupted, that, namely, of lacing his boots!

The meeting was certainly a select one, as I found I only made number four. Besides Mr. Peacock himself, there was an old infirm woman occupying a cosy chair in the corner, and she was introduced to me as Mrs. Peacock. She was, I fancy, the proprietor's mother; and I afterwards discovered she was

a sort of Elisha to the deceased Joanna, at least upon her own showing. "I've been in the battle fifty year, since Joanna died," she said. "I'm an old campaigner, sir." A simple man well advanced in years too, with spectacle on nose, was reading from the "Sealed Prophecies" of Joanna, a remarkable combination of prose and verse, which gave one rather the idea of alternate pages taken from the prophecies of Ezekiel and the History of John Gilpin. At my request he continued his reading; but he went on so long, and I had to help him over so many pitfalls in the shape of long words, that I forgot my politeness after a while, and commenced putting questions, so that eventually our meeting resolved itself into a conversational one. The subject of the reading was principally some shrewdish forecasting of events in the French Revolutionary War, and denunciations of "bad harvests" for national wickedness, a form of punishment which Joanna's early agricultural experiences naturally suggested. I was anxious to get the books out of the way and to come to facts; and I asked to be allowed to take the titles so that I might read them at the British Museum. Mr. Peacock readily allowed me to book the titles, but said the copies of Joanna's works in the Museum, were, he had been informed, forgeries placed there by

Joanna's opponents. I was presented with a copy of a prayer, which I was told was an "Indictment against Satan," and an "Address to the Bishops," which had been inserted some years ago as an advertisement in the 'Globe' newspaper at an expense of £4, after having failed to elicit a reply when sent in the form of a letter to Lambeth, Fulham, and other episcopal palaces.

During the reading of these documents, which were as diligently gone through for me as though I was incapable of reading, the old lady kept making ejaculations, Methodist-fashion, at any passage which dwelt on the impending triumph of the Saints, or demolition of Satan; and at the first convenient opportunity I put the question on which, I said, all appeared to me to hinge,—did not the hopes of the Southcottians, or the Joannas, as they called themselves, collapse when the good lady's *causa morbi* was revealed by a *post-mortem* examination? They smiled at my heathen ignorance, and pointing to the old lady in the corner, the two men said, "There are our hopes. Mrs. Peacock has taken Joanna's place." I did not like to say what I thought, or to hint at the unlikelihood of a family at the old lady's advanced age, but I suppose my looks explained my difficulty, for the old woman herself came to the rescue and

said, "It ain't a material birth we look for, but a spiritual one." Then followed a long disquisition as to what would have happened if the bone had not been taken out of Adam. He could not in that case have been saved, but the fact of the rib having been removed showed that salvation would come through a woman. Pressing Mrs. Peacock as to the distinctive character of Joanna's work, I found it to be the demolition of Satan's power. Under all other systems, which were good in their degree, Satan had been allowed to go up and down in the earth. Now his "indictment" was ready, and a jury of twelve saints would literally "sit upon" him. "I'm expecting it every day, every hour, sir," said the old woman; "a grand manifestation of power!" and I am sure the poor old soul was sincere. They had no bigotry about them, and were content, they said, to attend their parish churches or the meeting-places of any denomination, only claiming for themselves a front place in the future contest with Satan. They were angry with the bishops for not having noticed their letter, though the old lady said she was sure a bishop had soon after paid her a private visit, disguised in a wig, wide-awake, and mean attire. Mr. Peacock, too, was especially aggrieved with Mr. Spurgeon, to whom he said he had made a mild appeal at a Tabernacle tea-

meeting, when Mr. Spurgeon retired unceremoniously, and his deacons expelled Mr. Peacock forcibly from the premises.

A curious little episode occurred in one of our demoniacal colloquies; in fact, all our colloquies that Sunday morning were more or less Satanic. While Mr. Peacock was indulging in one of his diatribes, and quoting one of Joanna's long ballad rhymes with a fidelity worthy of an old Homeric rhapsodist, another female noiselessly entered at the door towards which my back was turned, and said over my shoulder "Please, sir, the old gentleman." I really fancied for the moment Mrs. Peacock's expectation was realized, but was relieved by Mr. Peacock, who informed me it was only an old beggar-man come for his Sabbath dole of a penny.

Before I left I was asked to append my name to the "Indictment against Satan," and a well-thumbed manuscript was produced for the purpose. At the same time Mrs. Peacock pointed me to a chest in the corner which she said contained a parchment document with over four hundred and fifty thousand signatures. "That," she added, "is the flying roll of Zechariah," and the old man who had been reading confided in me that his conversion had been brought about somehow or other by a dream of the "flying

roll." With regard to signing the "Indictment," I could not, of course, object to subscribe to such a document, only I have a business-like habit of not liking to put my name to anything rashly, so, the good souls will, I am sure, forgive the *ruse*—I appended the name of one of my boys, who has shown such a propensity to mischief as sometimes to be entitled an imp. I thought, therefore, it might do him no harm to substitute his name for my own. The following is the "indictment," which affords at once an excellent illustration of the undoubted earnestness of these people, with the strange verbiage they have inherited from their Elijah. At the same time there is no doubt that the concluding paragraph did relate to a hope akin to that which was disappointed in Joanna's case. Whatever may be the interpretation now, when Mrs. Peacock is advanced in years, there can be no question that an uninitiated reader in 1838 would have read the peroration of this strange document as referring to an impending "auspicious event!"

"February 22nd, 1838.

"O! God, Most Holy, Holy, Holy, Blessed and Glorious Trinity, be pleased to hear my prayer and supplication in behalf of these Thy people that are assembled together. Be pleased to illuminate their understandings, and remove the veil of darkness

that has so long stood between us Thy people, who have signed for Thy coming and for Satan's destruction; and Thy blessed and glorious kingdom to come, and Thy will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

"O! Blessed Lord and Saviour, Thou didst set bounds for Satan, through Thy honoured servant Joanna; that if he broke the bounds in any by temptation within or persecution without, he should lose his power and reign before the end of six thousand years. O! Lord behold the havoc he hath made among Thy people. O! Lord avenge our injured cause or no flesh can be saved. According to Thine own words in the Gospel. O! blessed Lord in the bitterness of my soul do I cry unto Thee, that Thou would'st reveal Thyself unto us, and decide this great contention. Thou hast counselled us to cast all on Satan, and direful experience has caused us so to do, for he has come to Thy people as an angel of Light, saying that he is the Christ, or he is the character, or he is the woman causing Thy people to err; or this, or that is the child or children. O! Lord I beseech Thee of Thy great goodness to show the true Mother, and no longer let the Child be divided by the false one, for Thy mercy's sake. O! Lord hear our prayers. O! Lord I beseech Thee let this day decide this great cause, and remove the stumbling-block out of the way, for Thy mercy's sake. Let it be known throughout all the camp of Israel that Thou art risen indeed, to conquer sin, death, hell, and the grave, then all the earth shall praise Thee, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. Maintain Thine own cause, for Thine own honour and great name. Let not the heathen say, where is their God in whom they have trusted? We have waited for Thy salvation, O! God. O! come quickly and deliver Thy groaning creation that has so long laid under the tyranny of Satan that usurper. We are weary of his heavy yoke; away with him, away with him, away with him from the earth; and every soul will say the same when they have proved the Saviour's fame. O! Lord, Thou knowest that I am not come

before Thee with a double heart or feigned lips. O what shall I say unto Thee to constrain Thee to take up Thy abode in me, and take full possession of my heart. O! Lord I claim it at Thy gracious hand, that Thou wilt for me the trial stand, and bring the traitor to his cross, and let him perish with his dross. O! Lord we are not come to plead for what Thou hast not promised to our forefathers Adam and Eve, and hath continued Thy blessed word to all the patriarchs, prophets and apostles throughout Thy holy word for comfort and consolation to us Thy promised seed, who believe the fulfilment of Thy promises. Thou hast said in Thy word to Thy Joanna, it is they that do in faith appear. Lord I believe Thy word is yea and amen. Thou art not a man to lie, nor the son of man to wàver. O! let this petition reach Thy throne, and come up before Thee as our evening sacrifice, acceptable in Thy sight. O Lord, I shall not be heard for my much speaking, but from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. O! Lord it appeareth to Thy handmaid that we are come to the Red Sea; O! let the spiritual Moses appear to command Thy children to cross, that we may reach the promised land, and there rejoice to see the foe to fall, who by disguise has conquered all. But now we hope that the strong man is at hand that will confound in every sound. O! Lord my soul crieth for vengeance from the ground, my soul had well nigh slipped, but Glory be to Thy Holy Name. Thou hast held me up to praise Thy Holy Name, O! send me not empty away, but give me the request of my heart. O! Lord Thou didst not refuse to bear the blame man cast on Thee; now, O! Lord I beseech Thee to let Satan bear the blame the woman cast on he. Thou hast tried man, proved he is dead to knowledge, as Thou pronounced him after the fall. And now, dear Lord, I pray Thee to restore us from the fall. Oh! Lord Thou art just to cast him from the earth, and bring to man a second birth. Even so come Lord Jesus Christ; O! come quickly, Amen and Amen.

"Revelations, Chap. xxii. verse 14.—Blessed are they that do

His commandments, that they may have a right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

"The sincere Prayer of Elizabeth Fairlight Peacock."

It is dated from—

"The Royal Manger, No. 3, Gloucester Place, Westmoreland Road, Walworth, Surrey. Where this prayer lies for signing, already signed over Four Hundred and Fifty Thousand ! ! !"

While there is added by way of postscript :—

"N.B.—Every serious enquiry answered by letter, post paid or otherwise."

The Epistle to the Bishops, which their lordships treated so cavalierly, is published as a penny pamphlet, with the following title :—

"A Warning to the Whole World, being a Letter sent March 10th, 1853, To the Bishops To let them know Their Dangers are near at hand and How they may escape the overwhelming scourge that is threatened to England for their neglect. By Elizabeth Fairlight Argus Peacock. Fourth Edition. Royal Manger, 3, Gloucester Place, Westmoreland Road, Walworth Common. N.B.—All inquiries answered. The King's Business requires haste. Price 1*d.*"

And the letter itself ran as follows :—

"To THE LORDS SPIRITUAL.

"I hope you will receive these few lines without prejudice, as I am about to lay before you things of the greatest importance to yourselves and our beloved Queen and the nation at large. I

hope you will not treat this like crackling sparks under a pot, and put a deaf ear to the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely. You are aware that the judgments of the Lord are upon the earth; and it is said in the Scripture of Truth that when that takes place the inhabitants of the earth shall learn Righteousness. 'What is righteousness?' ought to be our inquiry. Why Abraham obeyed, and it was accounted unto him for Righteousness. And the Lord is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. And I am about to inform you that the time is come, for the Lord is to be justified for what he has done for man. But you are still keeping Him on the Cross, by rejecting the visitation of the Spirit. Oh, that your eyes may be opened to see before it is too late! The Lord has threatened our nation, with the sword, famine, and pestilence, for the neglect of the Clergy and Laity, in not looking into the great revelation that is given to His despised servant Joanna Southcott. Remember the Lord said He would choose the foolish things of this world to confound the mighty. And who are so mighty as the clergy and laity in their own estimation, and so well supported for preaching about the sufferings of our Lord and His Apostles and Martyrs, while you are doing the same and worse? Because the Jews did not believe he was the Saviour of the world as you say you believe, therefore your condemnation will be great if you do not immediately look into the sixty-five Books that the Lord has been pleased to reveal for our instruction, and to arm us against all our enemies, spiritual and temporal. We shall not fear the monarch that is at the head of the French nation. The Lord has revealed the power of the beast is given to him. We that stand faithful to the Lord and his anointed, he will have no power over us. We shall have no fear of the Catholics or any foreign power that Satan may rise up against us. For the Lord has prepared a place for His faithful to fly to in the time of danger. I have every direction in my possession, for the Lord has revealed that He will have a strong army.

"Jews and Gentiles shall agree,
Joined in Christian unity
And my Spirit goes before them,
They shall gain the victory.

"When they're in the field of battle
They have nothing now to fear
For my glory goes before them,
Their deliverance now draws near.

"At this time the earth shall tremble
And the Bridegroom's voice they'll hear
They shall know from what I've spoken
This shall be a happy land.

"And, in all humility, I beseech you to have an interview with me. Remember Balaam was reproved by the ass. And may I stand as the ass to reprove you in all humility, is my sincere prayer. And may I with my friends stand in the gap, to the saving of the nation from utter ruin. All the clergy are threatened for their neglect; the Lord has revealed that he will let the foreign enemy in on you, and cut you all off. Oh that your eyes may be opened. Pray do not despise the day of small things, lest you lose the great things of the Glorious Kingdom, that is about to be established on earth. I have the pleasure to inform you that the new seed is sown for the kingdom, and in the name of the Lord let me invite you to come and taste of the supper before the door is shut. Our prayers are continually offered up to the Lord for you all, as our Blessed Lord left the example for us, when on the Cross, as He prayed for His murderers saying, 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.' And you are ignorant of what you are doing; you know not the great change that is about to take place. Do not think me too bold, as the nation stands at stake. It will be no use to warn when you

are surrounded by foreign enemies, and nothing but death and destruction around you and your wives and families, who with yourselves and property will be cut off as cumberers of the ground. The Lord said by his handmaid, Joanna, that

"Every land he would visit first
That England may awake,
And here my anger it shall burn
And make your hearts to quake

"Unless like thee they do begin
To seek their chosen friend,
And hear the words that come from me
'Tis deep what Thou hast penn'd.

"The grapes have made all nations drunk,
The children now appear
To end as Noah's sons began,
Then see the deluge near.

"To run with blood, much like a flood,
Abroad in every land
'Tis kindling fast! the flames will burst!
Oh, how will England stand?

"This was given by revelation to Joanna Southcott; but we have a promise that a good centurion among the bishops will be found. Oh, that he may appear quickly! Oh, what an awful day we have arrived at! Awful to unbelievers, but glorious to those who are waiting for the Lord's coming, when He will say to His poor and afflicted, rejected and faithful servants 'Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!' While on the other hand He will say, 'Begone, ye workers of iniquity! I know ye not!' You must own that the Lord knows everything. But they did not come in the Lord's appointed way;

blindness in part happened to the Jews, till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; then all Israel was to be saved. It was the Child-birth that staggered the Jews, and it is the Child-birth that staggers the Gentiles. So the Lord has proved both houses of Israel dead to knowledge, that He might have mercy upon all. I shall tire you with my long epistle; a word to the wise is enough. Oh! that you may be some of the wise whom the prophet Daniel speaks of. I have to inform you that the cries of the poor have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and you have nourished your hearts in the day of trouble. But the end is come, praise the Lord, O my soul! I am a true Protestant; therefore I have a claim upon your sympathy. If you think that I am misled to believe in the glorious promises throughout the Bible, and man to be reinstated into his paradisical state; what Christ died for, to destroy all the works of the Devil—that, you affirm, was done when Christ expired on the cross—which I cannot believe while I see his works so prevalent all over the earth. He is now come in spirit to fulfil that. Reverend gentlemen, I have no wish or desire in the least to insult you as ministers of the Church of Christ, but in faithfulness to God and man I have wrote this epistle unto you. Therefore I hope you will now embrace the opportunity offered of searching into the prophecies of the late Joanna Southcott, for in all ages of the earth the Lord called the prophets to reprove the shepherds. I, myself, had the command from the Lord to raise a standard in the year 1838, and to gather the names of the halt, and the lame, and the blind, to sign, as petitioners, for the second coming of Christ, and the Devil to be destroyed, and there are upwards of 415,500 signed as petitioners, of all sects and parties, Jews, etc. And by command of the Lord the standards of the twelve tribes of Israel was raised in 1848, which are for the gathering of the Jews, which are the Jews of faith, in believing this revelation which have been addressed upon. Reverend gentlemen, if you will appoint a time and place for a deputation to wait upon you, we will with pleasure; or if you will write a few lines in answer to this, we

shall be glad to receive it. If there is no notice taken of this, you may depend that this letter must and shall be published to the world as a warning to the world. Reverend gentlemen, I must now conclude by hoping that you may comply with my wishes.

"I therefore remain,

"To be your humble and most obedient servant,

"ELIZABETH FAIRLIGHT PEACOCK.

"Royal Manger, 3, Gloucester Place, Westmoreland Road, nearly opposite the 'Hour Glass,' Walworth Common."

"A Public Meeting every Sunday Morning at eleven o'clock. Evening at six. Remember India's Calamities, and how the English suffered,—a Fulfilment of Prophecy—and what is now taking place."

"This letter was published in the 'Globe' newspaper, Wednesday, Sept. 25th, 1867."

Such was my visit to the "Royal Manger," now at 97, Trafalgar Street. I did not go to the Sunday evening gathering. They did not press it, for they said the time of their great gatherings was gone. Their numbers were too small, their resources too limited. I very much fancy if I had gone, I should only have met the same simple trio, the old wizen lady in the arm-chair, the soft-voiced cooper in his shirt-sleeves, and the spectacled man who had been converted by the dream of the flying roll, reading from the "Sealed Letters" of the dead prophetess.

THE SANDEMANIANS.

It is often a question with me, in these erratic studies of religious life in London, whether it is better to set down crudely the first impressions after attending any particular place of worship, or to wait a little and correct those early impressions, as one often has to do, by subsequent study and investigation. By the first course, the salient points of any form of worship are more likely to be faithfully reported—though, naturally, one is liable to be led into inaccuracies in details or inferences from such external forms; by the latter, piquancy of description is apt to be sacrificed to minute and circumstantial explanation. The best method, perhaps, especially with a religious body so little known as the Sandemanians, is to chronicle, first of all, the mere externals, which every reader

may check by attending the particular place of worship to which reference is made; and then to add such explanatory details as are obtained by subsequent study or inquiry. When I set out on my voyage of discovery to Barnsbury Grove one Sunday morning, I really knew little more of the Sandemanians or Glassites than what the general public had probably learnt from the fact of the late Professor Faraday having been a member of the body—a circumstance which alone did much to rescue them from otherwise inevitable obscurity. I had heard that they carried to its extreme point the doctrine of "faith without works," and that a love-feast, very like an ordinary early dinner, formed part of their cultus. I had heard sly hints that the "kiss of peace" was literally retained among them too; but a somewhat prolonged experience had led me to discount considerably popular rumour on these matters. How far I had to do so in this case will by-and-by appear.

To Barnsbury Grove, Islington, then, I bent my way, and found the Sandemanian Chapel externally very like other chapels. Entering, I made one of a moderate congregation, composed of all grades and both sexes, who had commenced worship by singing a psalm. At the farther end of the chapel were two

rows of raised seats, one above the other; and in these were seated seven gentlemen, four in the lower and three in the upper bench, who were apparently the ministers for the day. The person who occupied the centre of the upper row was evidently the chief minister; while the middle of the lower was filled by one who acted as sort of precentor, giving out the psalms and leading the singing. The version of the Psalter in use was unrhymed; and at the conclusion of the first portion the Lord's Prayer was said by the chief minister, in a strange nasal voice, which may have been either natural or assumed. Singularly enough, this presiding minister bore a strong personal resemblance to the late Professor Faraday—a fact which I should have certainly noticed even had I not known of Faraday's connection with the community. After the Lord's Prayer came another portion of psalmody, this time from the lugubrious 69th Psalm, sung to a melancholy tune, as slowly as possible; then another prayer; then another portion of Psalm 69th, followed by still another prayer, and still another portion of the same psalm. This went on until every gentleman on the two rows of seats had prayed, and a selection from the peculiarly mournful psalm had been sung over each. The effect was to me monotonous in the ex-

treme. During the whole period, however, people kept dropping into the chapel, so that comparatively few underwent the whole ordeal.

After this remarkable exordium, which took up much time—for the prayers were long, and the psalms slow — four chapters were read in succession by the same person, without any break at all. These chapters were Numbers 13th, Ezra 8th, Psalm 37th, and St. John 9th. Thus, with so little variety, did the service make progress for one hour and fifty minutes; and just when the Islington people were coming out of their churches, and I must plead guilty to being at the very nadir of depression, the most melancholy of the seven gentlemen got up and began a sermon which lasted more than half an hour. He took for his subject an exposition of that most penitential Psalm, the 77th, "I cried unto God," etc.; and though there really was nothing particular to cry about in his sermon, he kept weeping and almost losing his voice from emotion—nay, more than that, he made many of his congregation cry too, out of mere sympathy, for the discourse was rather critical than pathetic. I could not pretend to sketch its subject. The only definite idea which I could clearly trace was, that thoughts of sin in the night were not to be explained away next morning by

merely physical causes; but when the preacher arrived at this point he broke down from sheer emotion, and passed on to some other topic, which gradually worked up to the same lamentable climax. I never remember undergoing such a protracted process of depression in my life. I am not exaggerating when I say that, throughout the whole service and sermon, the words kept ringing in my ears, as though I had really seen them forming a motto over the doorway, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." And yet—let me make an honest confession of my fault—when I did, now and then, look round the congregation, I could not help for a moment marvelling at the substantial and intellectual appearance of many of its members; and wondering still more to see many pretty girls near whom I felt I should like to sit at the love-feast if the φιλημα really were still an institution. However, the service was over; the good people fell to talking; and I was quite glad to see the gloom disperse. I saw something else, too: that, as a stranger, I was expected to take my departure; so, not without a feeling of relief, I made my exit, leaving them to their love-feast, with a pious wish that it might prove more cheerful than their service.

So much was what I gained from a single visit to

Barnsbury Grove Chapel; and I am bound to put it on record that, if their worship does not belie them, the Sandemanians must be the most dismal people on earth. I should, however, have done my good friends grievous injustice had I not eked out my first information by subsequent inquiry. Their twofold title of Glassites or Sandemanians is derived from their founder, John Glass, a Minister of the Scotch Kirk, and Robert Sandeman, his son-in-law, who developed Glass's doctrine. That doctrine may be gathered from the inscription on Sandeman's tomb at Danebury, New England: "Here lies, until the resurrection, the body of Robert Sandeman, who in the face of continual opposition from all sorts of men, long and boldly contended for the ancient faith, that the bare death of Jesus Christ, *without a deed or thought on the part of man,* is sufficient to present the chief of sinners spotless before God." Glass was deposed by the Scotch Ecclesiastical Courts in 1728, after which he published his views in a work called "The Testimony of the King of Martyrs concerning his Kingdom." In 1757, Sandeman addressed a series of letters to Mr. Hervey, occasioned by his "Theron and Aspasio," in which his opinions are set forth at length, though his epitaph fairly summarises them. He preached for a few years in London, and

then emigrated to America, where bodies of Sandemanians exist, as well as in England and Scotland. The number of the body in London at present, however, is only one hundred.

Popular rumour has not been so far wrong in its account of certain doctrines and practices of the Sandemanians, as that erratic organ is sometimes wont to be. Acting on their principle of taking every word of Scripture in the literal sense, instead of adopting any formal creed or confession of faith, they retain, for instance, the Agapæ, or love-feasts of the early Christians. The design of the feast, they say, is to cultivate mutual knowledge and friendship, to testify that all are brethren of one family, and to provide that the poor may have a comfortable meal at the expense of the more wealthy. No member is allowed to be absent from this feast "either through indifference or mere inconvenience." And kissing *is* an institution! "This (the love-feast) and *other* opportunities we take for the kiss of charity, or the saluting each other with an holy kiss; a duty most expressly exhorted to no less than five times in the New Testament . . " At the love-feast each member salutes the person that sits next to him on each side. A delicate work indeed would sometimes be that of placing the brethren and sisters, if it were not ruled

that they should take their seats by lot; for the Sandemanians regard the lot as sacred. While they do not object to ordinary diversions, public or private, they shun cards, dice, and other games of chance, because they esteem the lot a sacred thing. The washing of the feet is also retained: not, it would seem, on any special occasion, but the ablution is performed "whenever it can be an act of kindness to a brother so to do." Another peculiarity of this religious body is their objection to second marriages. The possession of a second wife is a disqualification for eldership. That the bishop must be the "husband of one wife" does not mean, they maintain, that he must not be a single man; neither does it specify that he must not have two wives at the same time—*cela va sans dire;* therefore, it must mean that he is not to have a second wife after his first is dead. Such is the Sandemanian exegesis. It seems strange that powerful and cultured minds in the nineteenth century can accept these remarkable doctrines and practices. The repudiation of the worth of works especially makes the Sandemanian a cheerless creed, after all. No room for humble acts of piety; no space for hope; all resolved into a cold, hard, mathematical acceptance of historical fact. The Sandemanians are better than their belief; their con-

ditions of acceptance and church membership are strict, and many offences deemed venial in society entail "excommunication" from the little gathering in Barnsbury Grove.

My mission is, of course, simply descriptive; and to the courtesy of one of the body itself I am indebted for an account of those private matters of discipline which, of necessity, could not come under the notice of an outsider. In all kindness, however, that outsider must be allowed to chronicle his own feelings of depression at the Sandemanian ceremonial; and with the tremendous tenets of that body, and the mournful sermon on Psalm 69, in his mind, it is inevitable that he should, however slenderly, link the two together, and ask himself, critically but not uncharitably, Do the two stand related as cause and effect? More frequent attendance might possibly familiarise one with the rigid tenets and monotonous ritual of Sandemanianism. I simply narrate the result of a single experience, which of my own choice I should little care to repeat. The very rattle of the Metropolitan train, as I rode home, seemed to echo through the dismal vaults, like a refrain the words which struck me as the motto for the Barnsbury chapel—"Lasciate speranza!"

THE PLUMSTEAD "PECULIARS."

MUST plead guilty to a weakness for peculiar people. he very name of the "Odd Fellows," for instance, ways had a special charm for me, as presupposing iginality. Eccentricity, when it stops short of ing offensive, is sure to be amusing. It was such a oclivity which determined me, as soon as the Plumead cases cropped up, at any hazard to "interview" Elder, or, at all events, a "Peculiar Person" of me grade or other. Armed accordingly with only e slight clue which was afforded by the name of the Windsor Castle' public-house, in which was held e inquest on the poor children who, it was alleged, d died from the "peculiarities" of certain parents d presbyters, I set forth on a voyage of discovery the certainly unromantic and apparently unsaintly

region of Plumstead, in search of the saints, who had made it their mission to force upon the public a somewhat too literal acceptation of that precept of St. James, "Is any sick among you, let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil, in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." Competent tribunals will have to decide whether the social economy of the first century can be thus violently, and without adaptation forced upon the nineteenth. The facts are patent. Two little children died from the practices—or rather non-practices—of these "Peculiar People." The risk had been run, confessedly by the "unfaithful," at all events, of having a pre-eminently contagious disease spread among the community by the manipulations of these "Peculiars;" and so it was that an irrepressible desire came over me to see what were the special peculiarities of these disciples of literalism, who in their, no doubt, honest desire to carry out minutely the directions of a particular passage in the Bible, appeared, at least to superficial observers, to neglect the broad principle prescribed by the very same teacher of proving their faith by their works—such works as should have for their end the social, no less than the spiritual well-being of their

fellow-creatures. The opinions and practices of these "Peculiar People" have so obtruded themselves upon public notice during the last few years that nothing more than a passing reference thereto can possibly be necessary; but many persons will be, unless I greatly err, as curious as I have confessed myself to learn what sort of people they can possibly be who make it their mission to foist upon society practices which strike one at first sight as so utterly abhorrent to all principles of social economy.

Arrived at that most unromantic suburb of Woolwich, I found no sort of difficulty in getting on the track of the "Peculiar People." The neighbourhood was literally up in arms against them—a fact on which I found the "Peculiars" greatly prided themselves, as going to prove them in the coveted minority of the saints as opposed to the world. Were I to quote half the hard sayings which I gathered by diligent inquiry among the small shopkeepers and citizens in general, I should convert this article into a series of vituperations which I shall make it my business expressly to avoid. If unpopularity be a test of saintliness, the "Peculiars" are certainly at the head of modern hagiology. I first paid a visit to the 'Windsor Castle' public-house, and, on stating my mission, the smallest child in the worthy publi-

can's family became at once interested in my doings, and furnished me forthwith with the addresses of the Elders.

The "Elder Sister" of the body, I was informed, lived immediately round the corner, and to her domicile I accordingly adjourned. I found a middle-aged woman, habited in a sombre dress and saintly bonnet, savouring of the Quakeress, who scarcely needed solicitation to initiate me into the mysteries of what I may venture to call Peculiar Popularity. She ushered me into a small front parlour, benched for prayer meetings, which, she told me, took place nightly, and immediately brought to front the isolated text of St. James, quoted above. I had inquired, by the way, for this good lady's husband, who seemed, as far as I could gather, to occupy a somewhat inferior position in the household, and was informed that he had gone, accompanied by two Sisters, on a mission of condolence to Brother Hurry—the father of the two little ones who had died of small-pox—then incarcerated in Newgate. I have no doubt that the "Elder Sister" more than adequately represented her absent lord. Let me in justice add, she was a decent, cleanly, well-spoken, working woman, evidently full to the very finger-nails of her strange faith, and impressed with the idea that I was a lost

sheep, straying, by a special providence, into the true fold. Pressing her as to what constituted the special vocation of a "Peculiar," I was told, vaguely enough, that it must be felt to be realized, and, once felt, would never be forgotten—which I could well believe.

I left the "Elder Sister" with a conditional promise to come back to prayer meeting if I could; but I was still animated to press on, in the ardent hope of interviewing a real live elder; nor was I doomed to be disappointed. The triumvirate who bore rule over the Plumstead Peculiars were, I ascertained, Elder Hurry, at that time in durance vile, Elder Hines, who worked in a gas factory, and held a sort of Primacy among the Peculiars, and lastly Elder Vine, whose mundane occupation is—or rather was—that of a coal-carter at the Royal Arsenal, and who was one of the officiating ministers in the case of the poor infant whose death had formed the subject of the recent inquest. Perambulating the essentially slummy regions of Plumstead most affected by the Peculiar People, I came by-and-by to Elder Hines's abode. Elder Hines, I was informed by his wife, had gone to London to further the legal interests of Brother Hurry; whereupon I hazarded a perhaps somewhat infelicitous question as to how it

came that, while the saints dispensed with medical, they were not above legal assistance. By my ill-timed query I lost ground in the regards of Mrs. Elder Hines, and could extract nothing more from her; so I passed on to the rustic cottage of Elder Vine, which stands on the very outskirts of the parish. I was fortunate enough to find Elder Vine just returned from work, and about to undergo the far from superfluous process of washing. He came, however, courteously enough, begrimed as he was, in answer to my summons, and gave me every information. I hope I am not wronging Elder Vine when I say I rather fancy he thought I was a legal gentleman inclined to take up the case of Brother Hurry in a somewhat Dodson-and-Fogg kind of way. However, I had attained my end. I was face to face with a live Peculiar Elder. Like all realized ideals, he disappointed me. He had only the same old hobby as the others, ridden perhaps rather more decidedly to death. The one item of information, however, which gave me real satisfaction was that he had that afternoon been dismissed from his employment at the crowded Arsenal unless he would promise to forego his "elderly" functions. He had, he told me, promised the head of his department that he would refrain from manipulating contagious cases, but

that functionary very properly submitted that he could not make it his business to inquire whether Elder Vine were manipulating simple catarrh or confluent small-pox; that his business with Mr. Vine was in his capacity of coal-carter, not Elder; and consequently Elder Vine's occupation was gone, and he a martyr for conscience' sake.

It might seem that, having been face to face with a Peculiar Elder in the flesh, my mission should have been accomplished; but rumour brought to my ears tidings of a certain coloured gentleman who was a bright and shining light among the Peculiar People. To this apostle's humble store I accordingly betook myself, and unearthed him easily, for, sooth to say, the Peculiars are not a retiring sect. He was airing himself at his shop door, and on my inquiry whether he belonged to the Peculiar People, seemed at first inclined to put in a modest disclaimer. He worshipped with the Peculiar People. He thought them good consistent Christian folk. He believed, however, that everything came "from de Lord," even—wonderful to relate!—doctors. He did not believe the doctor cured. It was "de Lord." But he had a supreme conviction that "de Lord" could use all means, even doctors, if there was faith in the reci-

This coloured gentleman's Christianity seemed the most rational with which I had been brought into contact in this day of strange experiences. He liked the Peculiar People's literal acceptance of "de Lord," but he was inclined to throw in "de doctor" too. He told me he had opened his wretched shop on Monday last with only £1 as capital, and, he added, "de Lord" had sent him customers. As he left me on the platform of the Plumstead Station I heard the little street-boys calling "Peculiar" after him, and saw him stride over the bridge amongst his tiny persecutors with an air of contempt that was simply superb.

Such are the Plumstead Peculiars. Their faith and morality are beyond question. They are all poor, but help each other out of their common poverty in truly apostolic fashion. They gather at their nightly prayer meetings. All the long Sunday they spend in their little grimy chapel, some who come from a distance bringing their humble fare, and making a sort of pious picnic of their devotions; but—alas for that inevitable but!—they let their little ones die. They spread small-pox heedlessly among their fellow-creatures; and why? Simply because they will ride to death that one text which tells of the prayer of faith, utterly oblivious of the fact that the same

writer who penned it added, "Faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone;" and are inconsistent enough, while repudiating the doctor for their sick little ones, not to hesitate to call in the lawyer to get their Elder out of Newgate!

MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

It may possibly strike some persons as strange that Spiritualism should be classed among the religions of London, however unorthodox. They have been accustomed to associate this subject only with dancing tables and locomotive furniture in general, or, at best, with apocryphal messages rapped out by unauthenticated great-grandmammas or other remote ancestors. A lengthened examination, however, of this most remarkable phenomena has proved to me that, to a very large number of persons indeed, Spiritualism is in the most solemn and serious sense a religion. They follow the dictates of the spirits in matters of daily life as devoutly as an ancient Greek did the voice of his oracle. They realise intensely the nearness of those who, they say, are not dead, but have passed

away from this sphere to a better. They view their own decease simply in the light of a transition; and fear it no more than they would the falling asleep or the putting off an old garment to assume a new one. Hence, logically enough, they argue that spiritualism is capable of giving vitality to all creeds, and need be inimical to none. The office they assign to it is in fact the providing demonstrative evidence of a future state, as well as revelation obtainable from no other source with reference to our surroundings, nature, avocations, etc., in that state. Many men, some of them well known in the intellectual world or high in social standing, are ready to aver that they have been converted from materialism by the agency of this system. We may deem the means inadequate to the end; many regard these people as mistaken, and their creed as grotesque; but about one thing there can be no mistake—they are thoroughly in earnest. Perhaps there is no religious problem of the hour so puzzling as this one; and the fact that such is the case may lend interest to a series of detached sketches, ranging over several years. The latest development, which is exciting attention in London as these sheets pass through the press, claims to submit to sight and touch in full light the "forms of the departed." It is easy to cry out impossible; but not so easy to account for

the fact that thousands believe the revelations, and substitute demonstration for what has been hitherto held matters of pure faith. "I do not believe,—I *know*," is the Spiritualistic symbolum.

MEDIUMS.

THREE remarkable spiritual mediums were, or had lately been, in London at the time of which I write. Of one of these—Dr. Newton—the public heard a good deal; but I have some new facts, even in reference to him, which will certainly be interesting, if not altogether edifying, to the general public. Before recurring to this spiritual Æsculapius, however, it is, I fear, necessary to inform the inhabitants of London —so little knows the world of its greatest men!— that not only science, but art, has its representative in the ranks of spiritual mediums. At the Progressive Library in Southampton-row, Holborn, on Wednesday evenings, Mr. Jesse B. H. Shepard titillated the ears of his audiences with pianoforte solos and soprano singing, affording them specimens of the "music

of the spheres" for the modest sum of half-a-crown sterling. Thither I adjourned on a certain Wednesday, and, having mounted *au premier étage*, I found a slim, artistic-looking young man, of some twenty years of age, seated at a grand pianoforte in the back drawing-room, with the gas turned down so far as to form a "dim, religious light," and it may be some fifty individuals, a majority of them being of the stronger or female sex—for to that point we are certainly tending—awaiting with anxiety the arrival of Mr. Burns, for proceedings to commence. Mr. B., however, did *not* arrive for some time, and proceedings had to commence without him. Let them first of all be described from a purely mundane point of view, reserving the "spiritual" question for subsequent consideration. Mr. Shepard—whom, on that ground, one would describe as a young man with exceedingly long fingers and considerable power of improvisation—played first of all a short piece by way of introduction, of a weird and nondescript character, displaying, as he did so, great power of manipulation. At its conclusion—for silence was enjoined during the performance—I asked him what it was. He said he had not been told. The spirits sometimes informed him, sometimes not; and he himself rarely knew what he played. The next piece the spirits *did* announce, and Mr.

Burns, having duly arrived, conveyed to us the intelligence that it was to be a "caprice." It was like the former piece, in that there was no approach to a definite subject or melody; but, at the same time most rapid execution was exhibited, especially with the left hand. I think I should have set it down as "caprice diabolique," had I been making out the programme. Next came an "operatic selection." For a long time I fancied that the fragments of airs, which with some difficulty I detected, must be *morceaux* from ghostly operas—if there be such things—but at the finale I was brought back to the earth-sphere by a well-known air from "Guillaume Tell," of which the instrumentation and execution were certainly very complicated, and would, I am free to confess, have created a sensation in any concert-room. Then the lights were put down to a mere point, and the vocal performance commenced. This was more remarkable than the instrumental, in so far as it involved the physical difficulty of a man singing in a clear ringing soprano voice up higher C—not jumping up to it, and then leaving it, but sustaining it, and shaking upon it! The first of the pieces—I should mention they were "Lieder ohne Worte"—songs without words—may be described as a quasi-recitative, followed by a florid *aria di bravura*, full of

the most extraordinary vocal gymnastics. It was not, be it understood, a mere *falsetto* voice in which they were given, like that which one used to hear at the Christy Minstrels, but a clear bell-like soprano. A second air, of a more ballad-like character, succeeded; a good effect being produced by single long-sustained vocal notes, with remarkable harmonic effects in the accompaniments, reminding one forcibly of a passage in Schubert's celebrated "Adieu," which, I fancy, the "spirits" must have heard. The lights were raised, and we had a second "operatic selection;" when again I could only recognise two airs from "Dinorah" succeeding a lot of presumably spiritual ones, and disguised in profuse "musical fireworks." A "march" concluded the performance, and was of similar character with the rest. In fact, the "caprice" might have been termed the "operatic selections," or *vice versâ*, and the march have been called a *bolero* or a *pastorale*, and either borne for title the "Representation of Chaos," since all were so thoroughly alike in grotesqueness, whilst none of them possessed any definite theme. They comprised, however, mechanical difficulties which, to an unprofessional critic, seemed astounding.

So much for the mundane description. The performance certainly would be regarded as a remarkable

one if witnessed in any concert-room. But now comes the *rationale.* Mr. Shepard does not know a note of music, and has had no instruction. For this we can, of course, only take his word; he cannot prove a negative. "Gifted persons"—whoever they may be; I am not one—can *see the spirits operating upon him whilst he plays.* In an account of himself, published in "The Medium," and entitled, "How I Became a Musical Medium," Mr. S. says: "While I was in a theatre the spirit of Rachel came to me, and asked me if I would like to be developed in singing." He answered "Yes," and was developed accordingly. The process of education in spirit-music seems even worse than its terrestrial congener; for he writes: "Oh, the horrors of development! And, even after that crisis has been passed over, the sensitive organism of the medium is alive to many discomforts and annoyances which ordinary mortals know not of. It is not all flowers and sweets; the rose of mediumship has its own peculiar thorn of suffering and hardships, and those who can face its duties, and sustain themselves in the vortex of development, have passed through an achievement which ought to entitle them to the consideration and fraternal sustainance (*sic*) of all true spiritualists."

At the conclusion of this performance, it was an-

nounced that Dr. Newton, having discontinued his public receptions in Cavendish Hall, would be happy to meet a select few at the Progressive Library, at eleven on the following morning, and to heal them gratuitously if they had need thereof. Thither I adjourned accordingly at the appointed hour, and found about twenty persons assembled, perhaps half of them being invalids, who were "cured" by Dr. Newton in the off-hand fashion which had been already described in more than one public journal. Over this ground, therefore, I do not propose to travel afresh, but would add this significant fact, that directly the "patients" were "cured," Dr. Newton desired them all to go away "as fast as they could," whilst we healthy people were to remain for an address. As this precluded the possibility of examining the cases, I was guilty of the irregularity of running downstairs into the shop, and booking one "case" at least before I was summoned back by the sonorous voice of the Doctor himself. As this case had already been published in the "Medium and Daybreak," there can be no impropriety in referring to it here with name and address. Mr. and Mrs. Cooper, of 388, Edgware-road, brought their son, a boy of some 14 years of age, who for the last seven years had only travelled on crutches or in a perambulator, to Doctor Newton, and,

after the third visit there, he was able to walk tolerably well with the aid of a stick. I mention this case as the only one I have been at all able to check myself, and which is, of course, open to confirmation or contradiction. The "Medium," it is true, publishes one or two others; for instance, Robert Andrews, 151, Metropolitan Meat Market, was "considerably" (*sic*) blind of one eye, but after treatment pronounced himself "all right." It is not, however, so much Dr. Newton's *modus operandi* with which we have now to deal—that is pretty familiar to most people. The great thing is the *rationale*—the avowed cause of his assumed healing power. This, we are informed by himself, is due to the fact of his having thoroughly reproduced the "Christ-life." Certain signs were to follow faith. And faith, added to universal beneficence, is possessed by Dr. Newton alone in sufficient force to guarantee to him these signs, one of which is the healing of sickness. It will be new—though possibly not startling—to many persons to be informed that Dr. Newton considers himself quite on a par with "the Nazarene," as he familiarly terms One whom I hesitate to name in such a context. The Nazarene is in the habit of appearing to him frequently, and tells him that the possession of these gifts is accorded to him very much because he has not fallen into the mistake

of deifying Christ. Such is Dr. Newton's theology—such the profession which develops into his extraordinary *practice*. It will shock many readers; but still it is necessary, in order to show the position assumed by this medium, to quote his own words on the subject. "The Nazarene appeared to me, and said, 'Brother, there's 10,000 spirits brighter an' better 'an me in Heaven. If you was to see me among fifty others, you wouldn't know me.' Says I, 'I think I should. I should know your *beautiful curly hair*.' The Nazarene made some noise in Judæa, but nothing like what I'm going to make in London." One other experience, and assuredly enough will have been said about Dr. Newton. As he was coming to the Progressive Library that morning, the horse in tho Hanson cab was taken with the "blind staggers." "The people began to make a fuss," said he, "but I jumped out, laid my hands on the horse's head, and he was all right in a minute!"

The third medium, who had then just left our shores for a brief return to his transatlantic home, was a clerical gentleman—the Rev. J. M. Peebles. For some months past Mr. Peebles had been enlightening congregations at the Cavendish Hall on Sunday evenings; and previous to his departure a ladies' committee organised a farewell *soirée* for him

at the samc rooms. Mr. H. D. Jencken, barrister-at-law, occupied the chair; and, in his prefatory remarks, alluded to the fact that, since his rough handling in Spain, he had been afflicted with double vision in one eye, but had just been cured by Dr. Newton. Mr. Shepard again presided at the grand pianoforte, and a musical friend whom I made a point of taking with me was much struck with the fact that the spirits who manipulated Mr. Shepard's fingers seemed altogether *au fait* with the regular pianoforte passages of ordinary instruction-books. The Rev. Jabez Burns, D.D., a Baptist Minister of Paddington, considerably surprised us all by mounting the platform and endorsing the claims of Dr. Newton and the teaching of Mr. Peebles. So very complimentary was he to Dr. Newton, that the Doctor could not bottle up his beneficence, but begged pardon for interrupting the speaker and greeting him with a brotherly kiss! Mr. Peebles spoke little, but what he said was a *multum in parvo*. As the mission of Dr. Newton is fatal to pharmacopœias, so is Mr. Peebles's destined to demolish doctrines, creeds, and Churches at one fell swoop. Those who had the power of spirit-seeing had always seen spirits standing beside Mr. Peebles while he was preaching, and everybody had heard their raps of satisfaction when anything very orthodox was enunciated by him.

Thus, then, were Art, Science, and Theology directly represented by spiritual mediums in the metropolis; for Mr. Peebles announced his intention to be with us again, and, in the interim his mantle fell on an Elisha who ministered on Sunday evenings at the rooms, whilst a conference, for the comparison of "experiences" was held at the same place at three o'clock on Sunday afternoons. And yet we hear people call this a material age! When we get our music, medicine, and sermons straight from Spirit-land, may we not soon hope to get our law too? Unfortunately the lawyers have not hitherto been supposed to go to a very elevated sphere? But the theology of Mr. Peebles and the "philosophy" of spiritualism have "*changé tout cela.*" There may be hope, then, even for the lawyers; and we may one day get our law, as well as our physic and divinity—and our music, too, for the matter of that—straight from Spirit-land.

A SHILLING SÉANCE.

THERE can be little doubt that one at least of the reasons why the pursuit of modern spiritualism—or rather spiritism—is so largely confined to the "Upper Ten Thousand," lies in the high price at which the spirits have hitherto consented to vouchsafe "manifestations." In a copy of verses entitled 'Wanted a Ghost!' 'Punch' pertinently asked,

> "Wanted to know what on earth are the merits
> That make Mrs. Marshall affected by "sperrits?"
> Wanted to know why respectable dead
> Come back to earth at *five shillings a head?*"

It is not everybody who can afford a crown, even for the privilege of communicating with Benjamin Franklin or Socrates; and the query of "our comic contemporary" seems to have inspired an enterprising

"spiritual" bookseller, in the neighbourhood of Holborn, with the bright idea of a shilling *séance*. If we have shilling dinners, shilling pits at theatres, and, last not least, shilling Monday "pops," why not shilling *séances?* No sooner said than done. We have them. The shilling *séance* is henceforth an institution. At the "Progressive" Library of Mr. Burns you can, on Friday evenings, for the moderate charge of one shilling sterling, communicate with such of the departed as you may ask to put in an appearance. It is true that you cannot, as at the higher-priced entertainment, summon your great-grandmother, or any other spirit, at will. You must "take them as they come." True, also, there is a significant addition to the public advertisement of the shilling *séance*, "strangers cannot be admitted without a reference;" but this regulation is as elastic as the "*tenue de soir de rigueur*" outside a Parisian dancing place. I proved it on a recent Friday, having no such "reference." I presume, however, the general "spirituality" of my appearance, combined, of course, with the production of the required coin, satisfied the janitor; for I was at once desired to mount to the first-floor front, where the spirits were to revisit the glimpses of the moon. Henceforth, then, 'Punch,' to keep *au courant* with these progressive times, must

paraphrase his previous utterance after some such fashion as the following:—

> "Wanted to know why the *middle-class* dead
> Come back to life at *a shilling* a head?"

The spiritualistic *salon* consisted of two small drawing-rooms connected by folding doors; in the centre of each apartment being a table covered with choicest specimens of spiritist literature—English and American. With these we regaled ourselves—I, myself, feeding my poetic fancy with some elegant lines of G. F. Train on the subject of the Church of England, designated as the Scarlet "Lady" of Babylon. During this mental feast, some twenty of the chairs provided for the audience or spectators were filled, and soon after eight, proceedings commenced by the proprietor of the "Progressive" Library. He took his seat at the table in the front drawing-room, arrayed somewhat incongruously, as it struck me, in a drab overcoat, like the driver of an omnibus. Opposite him sat the medium, a young man, habited in, I presume, his "customary suit of solemn black," with large jet watch-chain and cross, looking more like a very respectable undertaker's assistant than anything else. This was, of course, quite in keeping; and his name, "Mr. Morse," had, to classical ears, a nice, softened, deathy sound about it. Taking stock

of the "assistants," I found one titled lady, one aged clergyman, a solitary member of the Dialectical Society, and one doctor of what faculty I know not. The rest might have been anything. We were twenty in all, and the sexes pretty equally divided.

Had I been altogether unused to the manners and customs of trance mediums, I should have thought the poor young man was taken suddenly ill, for he turned up his eyes and wriggled about in his chair opposite our progressive president, in the most alarming manner. This, I was informed, was the signal of a spirit's taking possession of his body, which he himself had vacated *pro tem.*; his mental alienation being produced by spirit-mesmerism. This is the theory of the initiated. Possession being gained, the disagreeable symptoms subsided, and the "intelligence," in a soft and simpering voice, described itself as that of a publican "passed away" some seven years, and now full of regretful remembrances of the "poison" vended at the public in question. This I found did not refer to adulteration, or cast any aspersions on the quality of the refreshment supplied; but the repentance was occasioned by the spirit's having taken up teetotal principles. It may be mentioned *en passant* that the president of the evening was great

on the subject of abstinence. Possibly this was a mere coincidence—like attracts like; and a teetotal spirit would naturally gravitate towards a total abstainer, always supposing any such gravitation possible. When the "spirit" added its name and previous address the simpering voice was explained. It belonged to a female, Maria Crook, late of the Crown and Can, Clerkenwell, and now of Highgate Cemetery. I notice that, in the "Postal Directory," there is such an establishment as this in the locality specified, kept by a person of the male sex, with surname answering to that above. How far the medium profited by this source of information previously, is of course only known to himself. The name and address were given as above, at a public exhibition, and it is therefore no breach of confidence to repeat them.

After "coming to" for a short time, the young man again "went off," but this time the voice was rough, and the dialect an imperfect imitation of the rustic. It purported to proceed from the spirit of a "navvy" —name and address declined—who had worked on the South London main drainage works (the great "shore," as he termed it), under "a feller we used to call old Bags-o'-tea, cos we never could make out 'is name," this being presumably Mr. Bazalgette. We

had a graphic account of this gentleman's *rencontre* with his grandpapa after his decease, and of his being taught by the old gentleman how to influence "them shivery shaky kind o' people called *mediums*." He had never advanced beyond the earthsphere, and most of the spirits who influence tables, etc., are, he informed us, of his status in society. We can quite think so. In order to pay a visit to America he attached himself to a medium who was going thither. Being asked whether he could not get on alone, he said, "Not more than one hundred miles at a stretch, and then I finds it easiest to go *slantindicular*, fifty miles up and fifty miles down, instead of straight to the place." After wearying us with a good deal more of such stuff this party also went, and the next "possession" was very grandiloquent indeed. Posing himself with one foot on the seat of his chair, and his elbow resting on his knee, the young medium addressed us as "Mister-r-r Preseedént, Ladies and Gentellmenn." His discourse was of the varied aspects of spiritualism; but he declined to answer questions. Being pressed to do so before leaving, he again declined, adding, "I never break my word, sir; Thomas Paine never did whilst on earth," from which we were led to infer that we had been listening to the voice of the author of the "Age of Reason," *redivivus*.

It was now half-past nine, and the proceedings closed. Mr. Morse's tutelary genius, who is a *quondam* Chinaman rejoicing in the appellation of Tien Sien Ti, did not accord us an interview. How the president knew he was not coming I cannot guess; but he informed us very decidedly he was not; so we considered that intimation as our *congé* and departed accordingly.

I add no sort of criticism to this simple statement of facts, because there is no reason why everybody should not go and form or illustrate his own theory on the subject. It does certainly seem remarkable that such things should be going on amid the very roar of Holborn in this nineteenth century. We may, I think, cordially endorse the dictum of one who is the very Apostle of Spiritism, and who said, fairly enough, when advocating investigation, "These manifestations are either a gigantic imposture or a most important fact." Only a small section of the public has pronounced, either pro or con, in this matter. The very large majority, who are in the dark on the subject, will, I dare say, be glad to hear where they can find the opportunity for investigation at so reasonable a rate as at the shilling *séance*.

AT A DARK CIRCLE.

AMONG recent fluctuations of the market there is one for which we might not have been prepared, viz., "spirits" are "looking up." In the article entitled "A Shilling Séance," the writer detailed his experiences in visiting a "trance-medium," one Mr. Morse, at the Progressive Library, in Southampton Row, Holborn. The spirit "season" having again commenced, Mr. Burns once more advertised the Progressive Library as the rendezvous for the material and spiritual worlds. Now, however, the *séances* have the additional attraction of being "dark" ones, and the price is doubled—somewhat unnecessarily so, we fancied, since there must be a considerable saving in the way of gas and fire by the present arrangement. But no doubt in

this, as in all other cases, demand regulates price, and spirits as well as mortals are at liberty to ask as much for their performances as they find people will pay.

Entering that exceedingly go-ahead establishment on Monday evening, we found Mr. Burns at the receipt of custom, and florins dropping liberally in. Two individuals had preceded us, and Mr. Burns was engaged in urging them with some earnestness not to invest their money without clearly understanding that he could not *guarantee* results. "You may sit the whole evening without a table moving," he said; "or, on the other hand, you may get great results." This was fair enough; and, after some hesitation, the strangers paid the requisite florin, mounted to the first floor front along with us, and left the common world behind them. Some fourteen or fifteen people, of all ages and both sexes, were already shivering in the drawing room, for the fires as well as gas have to be extinguished in order to procure the rayless darkness essential to spirit manifestations. We looked like a party of conspirators gathering, by the dim light of one gas-burner, over the large table, and most of us beguiled the time in examining the arrangements of the spiritual arena. The windows were closely blocked with American cloth, which had the effect of

deadening sound as well as excluding light. In fact, we felt in a very Hades, and the new-comers betrayed no little nervousness at the strange position in which they found themselves placed. On the arrival of the medium—a curly-headed, bull-necked young man, and the lady who had "developed" him, and acted as presiding genius at his *séances*—we took our seats round an oval table, extinguished the lights, and waited for results. We had not long to exercise our patience. The circle was declared to be a harmonious one, and the more clairvoyant of its constituents began to see "spirit-lights," occasionally of a red colour, which, we were told, indicated "strength." We ordinary mortals saw nothing of this; but were first made aware of spiritual presence by insane gyrations of the table, which finally tilted over, and, in obedience to the ordinary laws of gravitation, and without regard to the toes of the semi-circle, came down with a bump. This had to be righted, and a brown paper tube that had been lying upon it, through which the spirits speak, had to be groped after in the darkness, as we were informed the spirits will never take anything off the floor. All being set square, or rather all having formed a circle again, we were regaled with the sound of the "spirit-voice." The tube was taken from the table, and appeared to be floating

about over our heads, whilst muffled sounds of a man's voice, talking in a very affected way, were heard to proceed from it. The effect was curious enough. At one time the sound seemed close to one's ear; at another, on the opposite side of the table; and then, again, quite up in the ceiling. The initiated recognized the voice as being that of "Hal;" and we were astounded to find ourselves in the reputed presence of "Bluff King Hal," England's Henry VIII. himself. On learning this fact, one of the strangers displayed considerable anxiety as to the deceased monarch's present condition, but was told by the voice to "shut up." The subject was, in fact, a delicate one; and on being unduly pressed, the voice followed its own advice, and "shut up," the initiated declaring that his Majesty had gone. This produced some little altercation, and there were suggestions that the refractory gentlemen should take their money back and go. They were, however, easily persuaded to remain in a passive condition, declaring they were only anxious to investigate; and so peace was finally restored. After some little delay a sensation was produced by the well-known accents of "John King," the familiar of the Marshalls, being heard. On being questioned as to how he came to pay a visit, he replied that Mary (meaning thereby Mrs. Marshall) had given

him leave to come. John King, it appears, is always given to using his speaking-trumpet as a truncheon when he desires to be particularly emphatic. The refractory strangers were pushing some questions on the subject of Paris somewhat closely home; John King appearing well posted up in the daily telegrams, and ready enough to answer vaguely as to the future, but declining any query that could possibly resolve itself into a test. Hereupon one of strangers, somewhat angrily, observed that John, being a spirit, ought to know more than he in the flesh. This John regarded as a *casus belli*, and dropped his speaking-trumpet sharply on the head—alas!—of the wrong man; not the catechist, but his friend! This second stranger waxed very wroth indeed at the idea of being "hit for what another man had said;" and nothing could possibly be imagined more ludicrous than the idea of two people, in blank darkness, bandying words with a *soi-disant* spirit on the subject of an undeserved blow on the head, whilst the initiated as warmly defended him. During the *fracas* John came over to our side of the house, and addressed me individually with the words, "Well, Doctor, how about the 'Daily Telegraph?'" though I had carefully avoided hinting at any intention of reporting the proceedings. Finally, John declared his leave had expired; and

a spirit with a husky voice, which sounded as though the fog had got down his throat, succeeded. There was not much to be got out of him, but his presence seemed to cause considerable distress to the medium, who was, indeed, very nervous during the whole of the proceedings, and had to be continually addressed by the lady who presided as "You foolish boy, be quiet!" The last of the spiritual levée was a Jewish gentleman, who favoured us with a few words in the conventional accent, slightly overdone. "Bluff King Hal" also looked in again, as it seemed, in passing, and then nothing would induce further manifestations. It is, indeed, a peculiar feature of these *séances*, and one which no doubt involves some law of spirit-nature not as yet fully realized, viz., the punctuality with which the spiritual beings make their exit square with the time for closing the Progressive Library.

A "dark *séance*" is certainly not satisfactory. It is difficult to assign limits to what might be done, given perfect darkness and utter silence. Add a previous conviction on the part of the majority of the circle, not only as to the reality, but as to the spiritual nature of the communications, and it is scarcely to be wondered at that persons deceive themselves or are deceived. We are not saying that the one solution or the other satisfactorily accounts for all

that took place at Mr. Burns's. There were one or two instances of what looked remarkably like thought-reading, and which would require considerable adaptation to reduce them within the limits of clever guessing or coincidence. After leaving a very wide margin for collusion or delusion in these matters, there is much that remains unexplained. That we for one moment realized the idea of talking with spirits, still less that we ventured to identify the

> "Soft rebukes in blessings ended,
> Breathing from those lips of air,"

will scarcely be suspected. Taking the matter on the lowest ground of clever ventriloquism and shrewd thought-reading, *plus* something that will persistently refuse to be explained by either of these solutions, the seeker after a novel sensation may do worse than invest a florin at the Progressive Library on a Monday evening. If the truth is to be discovered, it can only be by thorough ventilation; and the spiritualists have been up to this time somewhat shy of admitting outsiders to their dark *séances*. They now, however, throw open their doors to every one who comes provided with the moderate passport of two shillings. We strongly recommend any persons who so present themselves to refrain from expressing any adverse opinion at the outset. Let them hear all they can—

they can *see* nothing—and *then* pronounce themselves. It is unfortunate that visitors generally go with a decided prejudice, *pro* or *con*, and commence by announcing such prejudice. Let the investigator be content to do what is really all the spiritualists ask,—sit it out in silence; and if there be a trick involved, surely there are clever people in London to find it out. To announce an intention of doing so, however, is to put the practitioners on the *qui vive*, and so unintentionally to aid the proceedings.

THE ZOUAVE JACOB IN LONDON.

THERE is a peculiar type of individual whom an innate perversity of disposition seems to prevent ever by any possibility being "the right man in the right place." There was a story in one of the newspapers the other day of a British officer who went to inspect the historic field of Sedan, and fled without accomplishing his purpose, because he found his tailor, to whom he owed a long bill, there before himself. Of course, the tailor ought not to have been there. He was, decidedly, the wrong man in the wrong place. As palpable an incongruity surely was the presence of that 19th century thaumaturgist, the Zouave Jacob, in London, at the particular moment of which I write, when the Franco-Prussian war was at its height, and simultaneously M. Jacob arrived in London. With-

out speculating upon the connection between M. Jacob's visit and the possibilities of his having to act *qud* Zouave had he remained in Paris at that critical time, it must be evident that, granting the powers claimed by the gentleman in question, the very first act of the Society for Relieving the Sick and Wounded should have been to secure the services of the Zouave Jacob and his Transatlantic copyist, Dr. Newton. If the Zouave can cure, say, a broken leg with a word, why not place him upon those particular spots of his native land where unfortunately, at that crisis, broken legs and other limbs abounded? If, again, Dr. Newton dispenses around him the healing influence he claims, why was he not labelled with a red cross, and exported to Metz to radiate his influence through its fever-stricken garrison? Possibly Dr. Newton might have been thus exported, and the fact kept secret lest he should be considered contraband of war. We heard singularly little of Dr. Newton after the tremendous flourish of trumpets with which his arrival was heralded. But the Zouave Jacob's presence was undoubted, and seemed peculiarly ill-timed. Of course we were very glad to have the opportunity of getting rid of all the ills our flesh is heir to by a simple visit to a gentleman, even if that gentleman be a Zouave. Recent events had not, at that time, led us to associate

a very "healing" influence with members of this particular corps, any more than with the kindred service of Turcos. But it is to be hoped that we are above vulgar prejudice; and the only feeling which a disinterested British public could plead guilty to in reference to M. Jacob's visit was probably a regret that his own countrymen should be deprived of that presence "at their utmost need."

"Chased," as he himself expresses it, "from Paris by the war and revolution," M. Jacob settled down in the peaceful shades of 20, Sussex-place, Kensington—a locality selected by Bishop Colenso as the base of his operations on the Pentateuch, and was, thenceforth, to become a focus for the halt and maimed of London, where they might go and hang up their crutches at the shrine of the Zouave Æsculapius, and gaily go forth, sound in wind and limb, from the adjacent Metropolitan Railway Station in Gloucester Road.

Though not conscious of any particular malady, I sought the spot myself, and, on knocking at the door, was received by M. Jacob himself, who acted as his own janitor. He was a sharp featured intelligent man, with such a physiognomy as we have often seen underneath the white turban of the Zouave in the Rue de Rivoli. I was ushered into a front

parlour, the table of which was covered with spiritualistic works, and enjoyed a long conversation with M. Jacob whilst awaiting the arrival of patients. The hour for their coming was two p.m., but it was after three before one put in an appearance, M. Jacob's presence being evidently unknown, or of course Sussex Place would be blocked, and the West London Hospital deserted. In the interim M. Jacob presented me with his portrait in Zouave costume, and also with a work on Hygiene which he had published. He did not speak a word of English—a fact which he would have probably found inconvenient had he commenced practice on a large scale. His theory was slightly different from that of his brother practitioner, Dr. Newton, though he was much less dogmatic than that gentleman, and proportionately more agreeable to converse with. He said that the healing influence or "fluid" did not emanate from himself, but was dispensed by spirits surrounding the patient, whose etherial attendance his own presence guaranteed. He is, in fact, the medium, and they are the practitioners.

About three o'clock a gentleman of clerical appearance and most satisfactorily valetudinarian aspect knocked at the door. It was his second visit. His maladies were relaxed throat and deafness. He was

fortunately able to assure M. Jacob that both of these maladies had *increased* since his first visit. This, it seems, is the normal process under M. Jacob's treatment. The malady, whatever it is, first increases, then comes to a climax, and ultimately disappears. We then adjourned to an inner room for the *séance*. Myself, the invalid, and an agent or secretary of M. Jacob, occupied three chairs in line, and M. Jacob himself stood opposite us and remained in a state of seeming abstraction for several minutes after giving us the order, "Ne bougez pas." Of course we immediately felt the inevitable tickling at the top of our noses, and apparent impossibility of keeping still. However, we did sit quiet, and, in a few minutes, M. Jacob made some passes over the invalid's throat and ear, then seemed to be trying to crack his secretary's knuckles, like Newman Noggs, and finally came to me, telling me first that my left toe was cold—a statement I was compelled to contradict. Neither could I agree with M. Jacob that I experienced pricking sensations in my knees. I was then informed that I had a weakness in my back. I replied that I was not aware of this—a fact which was explained by saying the weakness was "undeveloped," as I sincerely trust it may continue to be. So the *séance* ended. I took the opportunity of going off with the

invalid. He told me he thought he was experiencing relief, and that several cases of undoubted healing by M. Jacob had come under his personal observation. It would be interesting to notice the class of infirmity which yields to this treatment. It certainly has the merit of simplicity. There was no noise, as I had expected, and had witnessed with Dr. Newton. But then M. Jacob's circle of patients was very restricted at that time; and, in fact, never took the same hold on the British as on the Parisian public. We had been repeatedly informed that M. Jacob took no fees; in fact, he himself said that he gained his modest livelihood by the sale of his work on Hygiene, but the spiritualistic organ, called "The Medium and Daybreak," put the matter somewhat differently. After specifying address and hours as above, it went on to say: "M. Jacob's method is this: he commences a *séance*, and all who are then present will be formed into a circle, and the fluid will then be poured out upon them *en masse*, after which they will be taken individually into the private room and receive special treatment according to the necessities of each case. *Fee according to station in society—the lowest fee being for the general séances, and the highest for the private séances.* What we required, of course, in M. Jacob's, as in Dr. Newton's case, was one properly authenticated

and undoubted case of healing; in the event of which we are quite sure the British public would have been only too glad to throw its physic to the dogs, and present itself, to leave its ailments behind, at Sussex Place, Kensington.

The Zouave, however, retired even more quickly than he came; few, save inquisitive people like myself, being aware either of his coming or going. I have since learned that he has departed from this sublunary sphere altogether: but—so transitory is the fame of the greatest men—even this fact I have not been able to substantiate.

SPIRIT-FACES.

I AM about to attempt what I am aware is a difficult task—namely, to describe dispassionately and judicially one of those so-called "higher manifestations" of Spiritualism about which people are apt to write and speak too much, as it appears to me, in the capacity of advocates for or against. I shall endeavour to describe what I saw here in London a few nights ago, as impartially as a judge might sum up a case from his notes of evidence. It is literally what I am doing. I am transcribing rough notes made at the time, and on the spot where the circumstances which I narrate occurred. I empanel the British public to say whether they think I have seen something very remarkable, or been egregiously gulled.

I received an invitation from a Spiritualistic friend

to attend one of the *séances* of a lady whom I must call Miss Blank, because her name is not public property. She is not a professional medium; she receives no money from those who visit her house, and has no wish to have that residence besieged, as it certainly would be if I gave the slightest clue to her name and address. She has no desire, so she says, even for notoriety on the score of the manifestations of which she is the unwilling agent or medium. The peculiar character of these manifestations is the production of the spirit face, or even partial form, no longer in darkness, but under a strong light. Now, I had seen tables dance and heard them rap; I had witnessed Mr. Home's "levitation," and listened to John King's unspirit-like voice; I had even felt spirit-hands, as they were called, once or twice; but all these manifestations, except the tilting and the rapping, had taken place in the dark, and I object to darkness. I love light, like an ancient Greek. It was the light element, I frankly confess, which mostly attracted me to the *séance* of Miss Blank. Miss Blank's papa—for the young lady is but sixteen—lives on the outskirts of London, as Spiritualists always seem to do, and is a respectable man in some small commercial line of life. Besides the medium, who is a pretty, Jewish-like little girl, there were three other children

present, all of whom discoursed of spirits in the most offnand way. Mamma and aunt made up the domestic portion of our circle, and there were, besides, the editor of a Spiritualistic journal, another pronounced Spiritualist, a doctor from the country, who had had something to do with developing the medium, and had been converted by her to the doctrines of Spiritualism, an old gentleman from Manchester, and myself—eleven in all, irrespective of our little hostess, the pretty medium.

After a brief confab in the front parlour we descended to the nether regions, where the spirits were in the habit of making their appearance in a small breakfast room next to the kitchen. The original method of "development" was simple in the extreme. Miss Blank went into the room alone. A curtain was stretched across the open doorway, leaving an aperture of about a foot deep at the top; and in this rather Punch-and-Judy-like opening portions of the spirit-face gradually showed themselves—first a nose, then an ear, etc.—to the circle who sat on the stairs. Now, however, that the power was more developed, a sort of corner cupboard had been fitted up with two doors opening in the usual manner from the centre, and an aperture of some eighteen inches square in the fixed portion at the top. At this I was told the faces would

appear. A lamp on a table in the other corner of the room was so arranged as to shed a bright light on the opening, whilst it left the rest of the small apartment in subdued but still in full light. I examined the cupboard or cabinet carefully, put a chair in, and saw little Miss Blank carefully shut up inside like a pot of jam or a pound of candles. A rope was put in her lap, the object of which will appear anon, and we all sat round like a party of grown-up children waiting for the magic lantern.

We were told to sing, and so we did—at least, the rest did; for the songs were Spiritualistic ones for the most part, which I did not know. They were pretty, cheerful little hymns, such as "Hand in hand with Angels," "The Beautiful River," and Longfellow's "Footsteps of Angels." By-and-by, raps inside the cupboard-door told us to "open sesame." We did so; and there was pretty Miss Blank tied round the neck, arms, and legs to the chair, in a very uncomfortable and apparently secure manner. We sealed the knots, shut her up in the cupboard, and warbled again. After some delay a face rose gently to the aperture rather far back, but presently came well to the front. It was slightly pale, and the head was swathed in white drapery. The eyes were fixed, and altogether it looked ghostly. It remained for some

time, disappeared and re-appeared; and the lamp was turned full upon it, but the eyes never lost their fixed stare, and showed no symptom of winking. After several minutes it went altogether. The doors were opened, and little Miss Blank was found, still tied, with seals unbroken, and to all appearance in a deep sleep. She was "entranced," I was told. "Katie," the spirit (for she was a familiar in the most literal sense), informed me that she gathered the "material" for embodying herself from the breaths of the circle, and took the "life" from the medium. Miss Blank was then awakened, uncorded, and taken to walk for a quarter of an hour in the back garden, as she was much exhausted; and we went upstairs to recruit as well. We had to make this break thrice during the evening.

When we re-assembled, after a good deal more singing than I cared about, another appearance took place in obedience to the command of the doctor, who had been in the East, and asked to see a Parsee friend. After some delay, a head appeared, surmounted by a turban, and with a decidedly Eastern expression of countenance and dark complexion. It did not satisfy the doctor, who declared that the face bore a resemblance to the one demanded, but that the head-gear was not *en règle*. This was Tableau No. 2,

which took a long time and almost interminable singing to bring about. Then there was another adjournment. The children were sent to bed, and the maid-servant—who, it appeared, was great at singing—came in from the kitchen to join the circle. There was one advantage, papa and mamma told me, about these manifestations; they rendered the children quite superior to all ideas of "Bogey." I could not help asking myself whether I should have dared to go to bed under such circumstances in my days of immaturity.

In Scene the Third, the face was quite different. The head was still surmounted by white drapery, but a black band was over the forehead, like a nun's hood. The teeth were projecting, and the expression of the face sad. They fancied it was a spirit that was pained at not being recognised. When this face disappeared, Katie came again for a little while, and allowed me to go up to the cupboard and touch her face and hand, after first putting to me the pertinent question, "Do you squeeze?" On assuring her I did not do anything so improper, the manipulations were permitted. This was the finale, and the circle broke up forthwith. The gentleman from Manchester was delighted, and all the Spiritualists, of course, were loud in their commendations. I reserved my judgment,

as my custom always is when I see anything that beats me. I was sufficiently struck by what I had witnessed to accept readily an invitation to another *séance* on a subsequent occasion. In the meantime I should like to submit these few particulars to a dispassionate jury for them to decide whether I was really for those three hours in direct contact with supernatural beings or simply taken in by one of the most satisfactory "physical mediums" it was ever my good fortune to meet.

A SERMON TO FELONS.

By those who like to see life in all its varied phases an invitation from Mr. Edward Wright is as little likely to be declined as one from Royalty itself. That name, as we have just written it, perhaps looks unfamiliar. It is of Ned Wright, the ex-thief, and now reformer of thieves, we speak. Those who hold, with Terence, "I am a man, and deem nothing human foreign to me," will not lightly neglect Ned Wright's summons to supper. That summons, forsooth, comes on no perfumed *carte*, nor does it politely state that "Mr. Edward Wright requests the pleasure of Mr. So-and-So's company to supper on such-and-such an evening," blending the Church and the world (as I have seen it on many an Evangelic invitation) by the delicate suggestion of "Prayers at 9.30" in the

corner. Not a bit of it. Ned Wright's bidding is of the bluntest, and goes straight to the point at once. This was the one that reached me: "Mission Hall, Hales Street, High Street, Deptford. Admit the bearer to Ned Wright's supper for men and boys who have been convicted of felony. Doors open at 5.30. Supper at 6 precisely." A strange hour, an ungenteel locality, and a gathering quite *sui generis*, but an invitation no more to be neglected than one from the Lord Chamberlain. True, there was subjoined a paragraph in its degree equivalent to our Evangelical host's 9.30 prayers, embracing the words, "'Jesus only.'—Matthew xvii. 8. 'He was wounded for our transgressions.'—Is. liii. 5;" whilst—I hope I am not breaking confidence if I add—on the other side of the card, in stiff MS., was the postscript, containing, as usual, the most important item of all: "Please take care that the tickets do not fall into the hands of detectives, and oblige (*sic*) yours truly, Edward Wright." Mr. Wright's request was no more than reasonable. The presence of those gentlemen, highly useful on the proper occasion, would certainly have interfered with the pleasure of his expected guests; and had I numbered any detectives among my bosom friends (which I take this opportunity of saying I do not), I certainly should have felt bound in some-

thing more than mere decorum to refrain from transferring my invitation to them. Now there is a grotesque as well as a serious side to all mundane matters, from the birth and death of a baby hippopotamus to a Thieves' supper. We have heard and read—nay, we have written—a good deal of the grotesque character of these gatherings; and a very Hogarthian picture indeed do they present under that aspect. Suppose, for a change, we look on them under their more serious phase to-night. We may or may not care much about the spiritual or moral bearings of the matter; but it has a very important social bearing, too, which may touch us more nearly. That seething mass of human beings gathered round the door of the little Mission Chapel down that dark and singularly ill-favoured slum is well worth analysis. They are mostly boys; and, as I thread my way among them, they surround me, and clamorously beg for tickets: for it seems that the thief-population of Deptford exceeds the limits of Ned Wright's hospitality. Assuring them that I have no tickets, I escape their importunity by interviewing Ned Wright himself in a cottage adjoining the chapel, and my young suppliants beguile the tedium of waiting by kicking at the chapel door, and climbing up to the windows. The cottage, Ned tells me, was a noted low brothel, which

he has "converted" into a house for Bible-women. Passing through this house, where Ned's wife and daughter and a few more female friends were taking tea, I came at length into the chapel, and found the guests seated, to the number of about a hundred, on alternate benches, prepared to use the unoccupied bench in front as a table. There was every age, from the lad of eleven, who had seen his seven days in Maidstone Gaol, to the grey-haired man and sturdy culprit who had "done" three terms of penal servitude.

These hundred branded men and boys represent, if nothing else, gigantic mistakes in civilisation. Whatever we may think of Ned's method or theology, we are at least indebted to him for bringing this peculiarly reserved animal—the habitual felon—into the daylight. Directly I entered, and passed up and down the riotous ranks with Ned, there was an obvious feeling of uneasiness at my appearance. "Excuse me, sir, but is he a policeman?" was the question put to my cicerone and his assistants. Being set at ease on this point, they at once became affable, not to say demonstrative, and absolutely "chaffy" in their attentions. The chief amusement of the boys, who were largely in majority, was that of pulling each other's hair; an occult pleasantry based, I found,

on the comparative recency of the "county crop"—that species of tonsure which all had undergone. One bullet-headed fellow of fifteen, who had just emerged from the retirement of Horsemonger-lane, was the object of special attention, but no human fingers, though lithesome as those of a Deptford prig, could get a grasp of that human stubble. A curly-wigged little chap of ten was seated on a back bench; and though my unpractised eye did not notice his exuberant *chevelure*, his cleanliness and prettiness led me to say, "Surely, Mr. Wright, that boy is not a thief?" "You shall see," said Ned. He went to the boy and asked him, "Are you a thief?" "Yes, sir," was the prompt reply, with a ready statement of the offence which had got him seven days in Maidstone Gaol. "Now, what did you sleep on when you were there, my boy?" "Policemen's jackets, sir." "And how did you travel to Maidstone? Did they take you in a coach and pair?" asked Ned. "Yes, sir," faltered the lad, evidently nonplussed. "Ah! you can go out, my boy; I knew you were not a thief." The practised eye had spotted him in a moment. He lacked—not the white wedding robe, but the black qualification of conviction for crime, and so was walked out into the darkness. Ned tells me he has constantly to be on his guard against this kind of fraud.

To get one of those paper bags now being handed round, each containing half a loaf and a bun, with a jorum of soup that is to follow, men and boys will assume a "virtue" though they have it not; but they have no chance with Ned. He has been through it all himself, and is still as sharp as a nail. For instance, the soup is long in coming, and the boys beguile their time with conversation, loud and not refined, but for the most part within the bounds of decency. One young gentleman oversteps those bounds, and seasons his speech with something not to Ned's liking. He is requested to take his cap and go out, and for the future to "keep his mouth clean." It was a weary waiting that, while the soup was sending its fragrant odours from the back kitchen; and besides the methods of killing time above-mentioned, the guests—that is, the juvenile portion—lightened the tedium and displayed the "ruling passion" by appropriating each other's caps or bags of bread, one boy even secreting the poker from the fireplace, and being ignominiously caught by a Bible woman, whom he wheedled over not to betray him. Before the soup came Ned extemporised a grace, and began by asking what was better than bread for the body. "Cake," suggested a boy—and it may be mentioned, all had begun their meal by eating first

the bun, which was meant for dessert. "Soup," suggested another. "No; not cake nor soup," replied the host; and then said a few words about "bread for the soul," whilst the guests stared anxiously at the back-kitchen door. For the life of me, as I looked round on that motley assemblage, with their stubby heads now bared in deference to their host's request, I could not help thinking of "a certain man who made a great supper and bade many," and, when the first invited refused to come, sent out "into the streets and lanes of the city" to call the outcasts. Well, in due time the soup came, in huge basins; and some of the smallest boys managed to stow away three of these, with much talk to lighten their labour. The men were quieter, and ate less. There was a stolidity about them which was more painful to witness. I do not believe that throughout the evening they quite got over the idea that I was of the Executive. When supper was over, a big-mouthed youth in the front row said to me, in the most good-humoured way, and without the least idea of a breach of decorum, "I say —feel my stomach" (he used a less elegant synonym), "I'm as tight as a water-butt." At the very back of the room was seated, shoeless and in rags, a singularly handsome and intelligent-looking man, with a long fair moustache and utterly woe-begone appearance on

his face. I pointed him out to Ned, and asked by what freak of fortune he had come to herd with those from whom nature had so evidently marked him off. Ned told me that he was simply a born tramp, who never had "had spirit to go in for a good *bust*," as he termed it. So little does Lavater avail one in such a gathering. I thought he had been a clever rogue momentarily down on his luck.

After supper, addresses were delivered, first of all by a gentleman who had been out to Port Arthur, and described in a graphic manner the horrors of convict life. Before commencing his narrative he prayed for a short time, and was responded to by an unmistakably burlesque "Amen;" but he soon riveted the attention of his audience when he told them how he had fallen in with a convict from Deptford in the prison chapel at Port Arthur, and how the man, who was sentenced to penal servitude for life, prayed him when he got back to "go and speak to the Deptford boys," and warn them by his example to give up thieving. He had never meant to be bad at first, but began by some small pilfering; was shunned by good boys; the police got to know him; at last he was "nabbed," and went on from small matters to great. "Tell the Deptford boys," he said, "that if I only had the chance to come back to England again, I would die

rather than be dishonest." This gentleman concluded his very telling and appropriate address by setting before them the practical value of honesty, and urged them not to be such fools and noodles as to thieve, but to ask God to make them wise and honest lads. Mr. Kirkham, Secretary of the Open-Air Mission, followed with a brief narrative to illustrate Dr. Watts's couplet:—

> "All that's ever got by thieving
> Turns to sorrow, shame and pain."

He told a pertinent story of his recent experience as a juryman at Clerkenwell. A lad of fifteen was brought up for some comparatively trivial offence, but, in consequence of previous convictions, the Judge passed the severe sentence of seven years' penal servitude. The lad was overpowered, and fell on the floor of the dock praying for mercy, whilst his mother stood by without tears, glorying in the knowledge that her son was the cleverest thief in the neighbourhood. "If you had better mothers than this, boys, your guilt is the greater. You may have mothers weeping over your fall. In any case, turn. There is not a boy here who may not give joy to angels to-night by his repentance." Next followed Ned, with the wonted stories of his career told in their own vernacular. The gist of his address was still

"Thieving don't pay;" to which he added the aphorism, rather pointed than polite, "You thieves are all cowards and fools." At the great fire at Cotton's Wharf, Ned was following the calling of a lighterman, and, coming down stream at the time, ran his barge ashore, stole a boat, and filled his pockets with money by rowing people at a shilling a head up and down to see the fire. "What was the consequence?" asked he. "Why, next morning I found myself lying dead drunk in a gutter in Tooley Street, with my pockets empty." He next heard from a pal that the fat had run down the gratings into the sewers, where it had hardened, and was to be had for the taking. Ned and five others got sacks from a rag-shop, and lanterns, and worked their way through the sewer, up to their middles in water, to where the fat was lying thick on the surface, "like a tub of butter cut in two." In his eagerness to reach it Ned outstripped the rest; and, just as he was nearing it, one of his mates opened his lantern to light a pipe. This caught the sewer gas, and ignited the fat between him and his companions. He stood there, and vowed to God if he got out he would alter his course; then, plunging into the water, he swam *under the fire*, and got back safely. "Just so," he said, "you are brave when being 'jollied' by your pals, but cowards when

in the silent cell. You are fools too. You get nothing out of your thieving. A lad in this room stole a pair of boots worth 5*s.* 6*d.*, and sold them for 1*d.*; another, a jug worth 1*s.*, for which he got a halfpenny." Then a hymn was sung, to the tune of "Just before the battle, mother;" and on went Ned again, actually forcing the fellows to listen to him with his tremendous lung-power and peculiar habit of dropping down on any "larky" listener. "Look you here!" he said. "There was a fellow kicking at the door just now. I went out and found a chap as big and as ugly as myself, and I pinched his nose rather hard. You wouldn't do that if I was alongside you."

He ended with a really eloquent though homely picture of Christ crucified between two thieves, and taking one with him to Paradise. "The devil says," he concluded, "'Can God have such fellows as you in Heaven?' Yes, He can. I have been worse than any of you. Before I was seventeen I fought young Cooper, of Redhill, for two hours and twenty minutes, was flogged in her Majesty's navy, and tried and convicted at Newgate for felony. I came, like that thief, to Jesus Christ. Take my word for it—thieving don't pay."

Two hours had now elapsed since supper; and, as

the viands digested, some of the guests grew lively. The majority were wonderfully quiet, considering who and what they were. These noisy ones having been sent off, the remainder—nearly all boys—knelt down during another prayer, and sang another hymn, to the tune of "The Bluebells of Scotland" this time. Some personal experiences were gone into. One boy had been twice in Maidstone Gaol—once for fourteen days, for stealing walnuts, and again for seven days for knocking down chestnuts in the Park. He professed himself ready to work, and Ned took him in hand. The man whom I had noticed at the back also stayed till the very last. I asked Ned what for. "To get a night's lodging and a suit of clothes. I hope to be able to get him the suit to-morrow. He is heart-broken," added Ned, "at the idea of anybody taking notice of him."

So ended the Felons' Supper. Ned has his own way of working, and talks more, perhaps, than one would like about the devil and hell-fire. But he knows his men, and speaks accordingly. If he does nothing more, he gives them a good meal, and glimpses of a cleaner life than they are leading. Those living bundles of rags, dirty and shock-headed though they be, are, at all events, a happy contrast, there on their

knees, or recalling from old Sunday-school days snatches of simple hymns, to the rabble outside, kicking and hooting at the door of the little chapel amid the congenial atmosphere of Hales Street, Deptford.

JUDAISM.—THE WEST LONDON SYNAGOGUE.

JUST as microscopic science is daily revealing diversities where we had hitherto suspected nothing but uniformity, so a glance at religious life, carried one degree below the surface, brings to our notice manifold and unsuspected varieties of development in the religious idea or sentiment. There are probably few beyond the pale of Judaism who are aware that within this body, which is to them symbolical of unity itself, there are two opposite schools of thought, representing divergencies, not perhaps so great in degree, yet similar in kind to those which divide Christianity into Catholicism and Protestantism. The West London Synagogue of British Jews represents the more advanced school of thought among the

Hebrew community; and, though their differences from the "orthodox" touch no essentials, they are still sufficient to cause a withdrawal of countenance on the part of the Chief Rabbi, and therefore constitute the West London Synagogue *quasi* Dissenters. After tabernacling first in a room in Burton Street, and next in a small synagogue in Margaret Street, the West London British Jews opened a handsome synagogue in Upper Berkeley Street, Portman Square. As this advanced or "reformed" body is to a great extent composed of the higher or more educated classes, whose tendency is "most to congregate" towards the west, the corresponding change of locality has become a necessity. The building, which is an exceedingly handsome one of Byzantine character, was designed by Messrs. Davis and Emmanuel, of Finsbury Circus, and has been erected by Messrs. Myers, of Lambeth, at a cost of £20,000. It is capable of containing 1000 persons — that is, 500 males on the ground floor, and an equal number of females in the gallery. The organ, by Messrs. Gray and Davison, is placed at the east end of the building behind the tabernacle.

The religious ceremony, which attracted a large congregation, commenced with the carrying in procession of the "scrolls of the law," and their deposi-

tion in the ark. This was performed by Revs. Professor Marks, A. Löwy, and several influential Jewish laymen. During this portion of the proceedings some versicles were chanted, and, at its conclusion, an appropriate Hebrew prayer was read by Rev. Mr. Löwy, the assistant minister. Then an eloquent sermon was preached by the chief minister, the Rev. Professor Marks. He selected as his text 1st Chronicles xx. 28; "And David said unto Solomon his son, 'Be strong and of good courage, and do it; fear not, nor be dismayed; for the Lord, even my God, will be with thee; He will not fail thee nor forsake thee until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord.'" This was read first in Hebrew, and then translated into English words differing scarcely at all from the Authorised Version. This, the preacher observed, was a scriptural watchword, in which the Divine aid was promised to every good work. On this the starting-point of their new period of congregational history, he would deviate somewhat from ordinary pulpit utterances, and aim rather at delivering a public address than a homily. "It was now," he said, "thirty years since the congregation, whose third synagogue he consecrated to-day, had started into being. Never, in an equal time, had so much

been done for the Jews of Britain. In those three decades the Jews had gained great advantages. The prejudices of centuries had been conquered, and the barriers of exclusion had come down, one after another, before the advance of civilization. Every disqualification had been removed, and there was absolutely no distinction between the Jew and his Christian brother. So had it been with our inner communal life. Education had made rapid strides. There were no longer religious tests at the universities; and our youths had shown themselves well able to maintain their ground among their compeers. So, too, with schools for the poor. There were few among the Jews who now lacked the common franchise of education. Passing to spiritual matters, it was impossible, the Professor remarked, to call up without pain the recollection of what the synagogue was thirty years ago. The sacred office was performed more as a stereotyped task than as the spontaneous effusion of pious hearts. The ritual was burdened with pages of the private works of pious rabbis, and with polemical and metaphysical discussions quite alien from the spirit of prayer. Pulpit teaching there was absolutely none. Such was the Anglo-Jewish Synagogue in the year 1841, when a few thinking Israelites formed a small congregation

in Burton Street, with the view of improving certain outward forms, for which improvements they had in vain petitioned the ecclesiastical authorities. They were met in turn by stolid apathy, by honoured prejudices, and by heated opposition from those who reverenced mere antiquity. It was the common fate, he said, of all who heeded conscience and duty more than authority. "So we went on our quiet way, and this synagogue shows our progress. In this we seem to see the literal fulfilment of our text. We have failed, it is true, to find conciliation in the acts of the clerical body; but our lay brethren of other synagogues have lost all angry feelings. Amongst educated laymen we see a nascent feeling that the spirit of Judaism is large enough to embrace in its loving grasp all who cling to the eternal principles of Moses and the Prophets, without rigid uniformity as to mere formulas. You Israelites," the Rev. Professor said, in a powerful apostrophe, "who would appropriate the genius of the age, must bend to the inexorable fact that the communal tie will be proved, not by narrowness, but by breadth; not in unbending uniformity of ritual, but by the great and immutable truths of Sinai." All synagogues, he said, had awakened. They were no longer merely houses of prayer, but also of pulpit instruction. How far this

fact was due to the influence of Burton Street, he did not pause to inquire. The fact was matter of history. Services had been abridged or subdivided. Choral music had been introduced. The pulpit formed a prominent feature in every synagogue. Contrasting synagogue life of to-day with the date of Burton Street, he thanked God that he had lived to see this triumph of the West London Synagogue. "Yet," he remarked in a different strain, "a cloud descends, as I speak, to mantle my joy. The forms of many are absent from our midst. We see around us the offerings of filial piety to their memory, and, though separated bodily, we are yet one with them in spirit. Finally," he concluded, "I consecrate this synagogue to the love, knowledge, and reverence of the One only God and Father of all men, and to the doctrines revealed by Moses. I consecrate it to the same ritual that has obtained amongst us since we became a congregation, believing that, while the principles of Judaism are immutable, its forms are capable of infinite adaptation, even as I believe that wherever God is worshipped in spirit—be it in synagogue, church, chapel, or mosque—there He is present. I consecrate it to the spirit of love that recognizes in every human being a child of God, a brother, and a sister, and to those humane principles which the

Scripture says shall prevail when the promised Messiah appears, and when 'the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.'"

After the sermon Professor Marks offered a short prayer, and the ceremony concluded with the ordinary office for the day.

SYNAGOGUE SERVICE.

A SKETCH of the religions of London would be manifestly incomplete without some reference to the oldest religion of all, and the cradle from which all the motley family has grown up. I allude, of course, to Judaism. Without going into the vexed question of the connection between this system and others possibly older still, like the Indian, it is enough for our purpose to remark that this is, in reality, the parent of all the Christian creeds, and, as such, demands something more than a passing notice.

With the single exception of the opening of Professor Marks's Synagogue, in Upper Berkeley Street, I had not, at the time of entering on the present inquiry, ever been at a synagogue service, and, as I was aware that this particular place of worship

embodied the most advanced section of "Reformed" Jews, I felt it would be hardly fair to make this the sole representative of the Jewish persuasion in London. Probably many persons are as little aware as I was myself up to a certain period of the immense difference existing between the Reformed and Orthodox Jews. As the Jewish is eminently a national faith, this difference does not, of course, extend to essentials; but, in point of discipline and ritual, the distinction may be not inaptly described as almost identical with that existing between the Protestant and Catholic bodies in Christianity. The Reformers do not acknowledge the force of many of the traditional laws, which are observed by the Orthodox Jews, and at the Berkeley Street Synagogue there is an organ accompaniment to the service, and the prayers are considerably abridged.

Determined then to go to head-quarters for my information, I first of all attended a Friday evening service at the Great Synagogue, Duke's Place, Aldgate. As, according to Jewish mode of reckoning, Sabbath comes in at sunset on Friday, this would, of course, represent the first Sabbath service, and it is technically termed the "Service of the Reception of the Sabbath." The hour varies with the time of year. On the fine autumn evening when I paced the little

side street running out of the great metropolitan thoroughfare, with its quaint old-fashioned Jewish book-shops, the hour of service was half-past five. I got there half an hour before that time, and found the spacious building already lighted up, with large chandeliers suspended from the ceiling, and literally fulfilling their name, since no gas is used in the Great Synagogue. Eighteen dozen candles are used when the chandeliers are all lighted, and the effect must be grand in the extreme. It was imposing enough on the occasion of my visit, when the edifice was only partially illuminated. It is with the greatest diffidence I always enter a place of worship, with the manners and customs of which I am unfamiliar. When I go to a Roman Catholic Chapel I am constantly divided in opinion as to whether I shall openly avow my Protestantism by going to my seat straightway, or enter under false pretences with a genuflection. Most peculiarly did I feel this "foreign" sensation when I entered the Great Synagogue. Above all did my Christian courtesy seem to protest against the retention of my hat, but an obliging verger soon put me at my ease, gave me a prayer-book, with the Hebrew and English service, and handed me literally to the "chief seat in the synagogue," for I found, almost to my dismay, that I was representing Baron Rothschild.

In the centre of the building on the basement was a large railed platform for the Reader, Wardens, and Choir, whilst at the end of the building was the "Ark," or veiled receptacle for the Law. Spacious galleries ran round the building, in which, behind a *grille*, were the places for the female congregation. Before the ark, and around the central platform, were huge tapers burning, just as one sees in a Roman Catholic place of worship. Indeed there were many points in which the ceremonial reminded me of the ritual of Catholicism. For instance, on entering the synagogue most of the worshippers bowed towards the "Ark," just as the Roman Catholic makes obeisance towards the High Altar, and, at the conclusion of the service, the Chief Rabbi laid his hands on children, and blessed them, as a Roman prelate might do. Dr. Adler, who is a venerable-looking man, entered in due time, clad in a sort of academic gown, with a purple collar and cap of the same colour, and took his place in a small pew on one side of the recess containing the Ark. In this pew he remained during the entire service, and most of the time with his back to the congregation, appearing to be absorbed in private prayer. The Reader took his place on the platform facing the Ark, and the Choir were ranged behind him, and presently the service began with a musical

intonation on his part, to which the choir responded in a plaintive air, so ornate as almost to have a secular sound. It reminded me forcibly of that most pathetic Welsh melody, 'Ar hyd y nos;' I say this with no sort of disrespect. I was amazed at the musical beauty of the service. The Reader's part was most florid, and would have frightened a Minor Canon into fits, whilst the choral portions continually reminded me of well-known airs, but throughout there seemed to run an undercurrent of plaintiveness—almost of sadness—as though it were really being sung by captive Jews beside the waters of Babylon. I do not know whether this character is studiously given to the singing, or is really a spontaneous unstudied effect of the Jews' position as a dispersed people. It was singularly beautiful, and impressed me profoundly.

If I must speak plainly, however, I cannot say that the service appeared to me to produce any perceptible effect on the congregation. There seemed that almost *distrait* appearance which one so often notices in Catholic as contrasted with Protestant worshippers. This results, of course, in these cases from the different genius of the service. In one case the priest to a great extent does something to which the congregation only express assent by their pre-

sence : in the other they themselves worship, with the minister only for their mouthpiece. I own I expected to find the latter characteristic more largely permeate Jewish devotion, but I seemed to be disappointed. There was the constant dropping in of fresh members of the congregation, all through the service. Some were evidently praying heart and soul, but—so at least it seemed to me—praying *by themselves*, and apart from the public service. Two young men behind me engaged in light conversation so loud as almost to annoy me, but prayed volubly and loudly at certain portions of the service. The effect of these exceedingly rapid prayers of the congregation was curious in the extreme. Some quite sang their prayers, others murmured them in a low *bourdon* kind of voice, but all with the greatest rapidity. I soon lost myself in the intricate mazes of the prayer-book, and could not, until the very end, get over a kind of dissipated feeling at keeping my hat on ; but the musical beauty of the service lingered with me. The parting hymn, or 'Yigdal' (corresponding to the Christian Doxology), was really one of the sweetest compositions I ever heard. The reader's portion was as difficult as the recitative of an opera, only more melodious, and quite different from the monotonous Gregorian music to which corresponding

portions of the service are sung in a Roman Catholic Church. The prayer for the Queen and Royal Family, which is used at every synagogue-service, sounded incongruous enough, since the names were inserted in the vernacular, whilst the body of the prayer was of course, like the rest of the service, in Hebrew.

On the following morning I attended Sabbath service at the Bayswater Synagogue, in the Harrow Road, over which the Rev. Dr. Hermann Adler, a son of the chief rabbi, presides. Here the congregation was larger than at the Great Synagogue, though many persons were still deferring their return to town until the opening of the Jewish new year. When this occurs every seat is full, for Bayswater is rapidly assuming the character of a Jewish colony. The Sabbath-morning service is much more comprehensible than that of the preceding evening. The taking of the Scroll of the Law from the Ark to the Reader's place and its subsequent return form landmarks by which the uninitiated can steer his course through the long and elaborate service. Again, as at the Great Synagogue, I was the only stranger present, and my alien condition was here more apparent as all the congregation, except myself, wore the distinctive badge of the Tallith, or long white shawl

or scarf. The chief minister and two readers were arrayed in academic gown and bands and very clerical hats, almost like a bishop's, with quite a prelatical rosette in front. The Rev. I. Samuel performed the Reader's part of the service most musically; and the second Reader delivered with effect the long portions of the Law and Prophets for the day. Dr. Hermann Adler also preached an eloquent sermon—of course in English, though with frequent Hebrew quotations. Taking as his text a dictum of the Rabbi Akiba, —"Ubetor haolam nadôn, the world is ruled with goodness"—he referred to his discourse of the previous Sabbath, which had been on the subject of the "Compatibility of Man's Freewill with God's Providence." His present subject he announced as an examination of the question, "How Sin and Suffering in the World could be Reconciled with God's Superintendence." The heathens of old met this problem either by a sullen stoicism or vulgar epicureanism. Pure philosophy enables us to grasp the truth that "the world is ruled with goodness." Man's capacities for happiness prove this. It is true that there is much misery in the world; and yet it is quite evident that evil was not designed as the ultimate end of the Divine arrangement, but is incidental to a scheme in which human freewill forms an ingredient. Most of

it is of man's own making; a result of our own folly. Man's heart of old "fretted against the Lord." "You have heard, my brethren, in the portion of the Law read to-day, the dire prophecies against backsliders. Our position as a dispersed people shows that not one word of that prophecy has failed." Evil is inseparable from the fact of man's free agency. If he had not the power of choosing between evil and good, he would cease to be a rational creature.

But still, with all this evil on man's part, God is as good as though man had never sinned. When we consider man's provocation and God's goodness, we must be penetrated with a sense of the Divine mercy.

So far, moral evil has been glanced at; but there is also physical evil in the world, in the form of famine, shipwrecks, volcanoes, etc., especially in the shape of sickness, for which we are not ourselves responsible, and which seem strictly acts of God. Now how can we reconcile this with His goodness? Since the object of all nature is good, we may be sure that some good end is contemplated even here. It is just as when a father gives a bitter potion to a sick child. The child, in its ignorance, does not understand the act. We are not so ignorant as this. Science tells us that the same thunderstorm which

wields the bolt of death purifies the air; that the wind which destroys a ship dispels a pestilence. It destroys the few to preserve the many. We know little as yet of earthquakes and volcanoes, we are only beginning to learn that subterranean fires are perhaps as necessary as the air and the sunshine. Pain, again, is hard to bear, but it is often a warning against vice. Sudden death is a great affliction, but it is worth a thousand homilies on the transitoriness of the world. So is poverty a trial, but its evident object is to restore moral health, and to teach self-denial. These are chastenings of God to purify you. Evil is finite, but God's goodness is infinite.

But even still there is some evil which we cannot account for. We see vice pampered, virtue trampled down, for instance. But shall we doubt and despair because we cannot understand? We see but an infinitesimal portion of the scheme of Providence. We are only standing on the shore of the illimitable ocean. The time will come when we shall awaken to eternal life, and say with the Patriarch, "Surely God was in this place and I knew it not!" Then we shall see nature unveiled, and trace the course of the Almighty. We shall see evolved out of the chaos of history the great moral that all was contributing to the happiness of man. Then we shall confess "all

partial evil universal good." Then we shall learn that the universe was "ruled with goodness," and that no really evil thing came from heaven, but all was wrought by God for our good.

The sermon was very short, occupying scarcely twenty minutes in delivery, but was terse, practical, and to the point. Again a beautiful hymn, called "Adon-Olam," and the Synagogue service was over.

In a subsequent conversation with one of the officiating ministers, I learnt the cause of irregularity in attending the Sabbath-eve service. Many of the congregation are engaged in business until the very hour of sunset, and consequently the alternative is forced upon them of either coming late or not at all. This is understood, and, consequently, late attendance does not assume the character of an irregularity as it would do at one of our services.

From the same source I learnt that the Jewish population in Great Britain is 50,000, of whom 40,000 reside in London. Besides the division into Reformed and Orthodox Jews, there is another, based solely on the pronunciation of the sacred language, one portion adopting the German, and the other the Portuguese. The latter is the pronunciation used by Christian scholars.

The principal educational establishment is the Jews'

Free School, in Bell Lane, Spitalfields, where upwards of 2000 children are in daily attendance. The chief benevolent institution is what is termed the "Board of Guardians." The Jews in London also interest themselves largely in the education of Deaf Mutes.

BLESSING THE PALMS.

For any one who is really anxious to study the genius of Catholic ceremonial, and estimate aright the force of objective teaching in matters of faith, there is no period so opportune for observation as the season of Passion-tide, especially when it is culminating in Holy Week. From Christmas to Easter, the sacred history is, as it were, developed, act by act, like a mighty drama, in the services of the Church; and, from the position which the death and resurrection occupy in a sacramental system like that of the Roman *cultus*, it is inevitable that these should form, as it were, the pivot on which all turns. To the devout Catholic, then—for I am not speaking of the mere formalist in this or other creeds—nothing can be more intense, or less sensational, than the growing interest with which he advances through the shadowed season of Lent to

Passion-tide, Holy Week, and Good Friday, as if along the Via Dolorosa to the steeps of Calvary itself. He lives over again that life he feels was once lived for him in the Holy Land. The rude birth at Bethlehem, the thirty years of veiled home-life at Nazareth, every jot and tittle of the three years' ministry among the Galilean Hills, are as fresh as they were eighteen hundred years since; and the death he endeavours to reproduce even more perfectly than the life—for, in his theory of redemption, though the passion was life-long, it was the death that was atoning. From the dawn of Palm Sunday, commemorating the last entry into the Holy City, to the evening of Good Friday, when the brief history of the Man of Sorrows was closed in death, the religious exercises of the devout Catholic are of the most severe and overwhelming kind; and, even to the outside observer, most impressive and picturesque. Without for one moment passing judgment on other forms of faith which are less demonstrative, there can be no doubt that this objective teaching does take an immense hold of those who, from their present constitution, are swayed to a large extent by their senses; and some account of Catholic ceremonial from such a point of view can scarcely lack interest even for those who differ *toto cælo* in their own theories or practice.

On Palm Sunday, then, is commemorated the entry of Christ into Jerusalem, on the first day of the Passover week, from Bethany. On that occasion, the sacred narrative informs us, the great crowds of those who had come up for the annual festival hailed the Nazarene teacher with genuine popular enthusiasm, and roused hopes in His followers that, at last, the time for actual Messiahship, as they deemed it, had come. "They took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him, and cried 'Hosanna!'" Having been informed that the Archbishop of Westminster would officiate at the Benediction of the Palms which still perpetuates the memory of this striking incident, I went some time before the hour appointed, to the Pro-Cathedral, Kensington, which I found draped with purple, the pictures of the Stations veiled, and every superfluous ornament removed. A small congregation was gathered for Low Mass, nearly every member being clothed in black; and certainly nothing could be further removed from the "sensational" than the whole tone of this service. There was no music of any kind. The low, monotonous sound of the priest's voice at the end, and the occasional tinkle of a little bell at the more solemn portions of the celebration, were all that broke the silence. Soon after half-past ten this congregation

dispersed, and that for High Mass assembled. It gradually assumed vast proportions; and by the time the Archbishop arrived the spacious edifice was full, without being crowded. Dr. Manning, on reaching the Sacrarium, proceeded at once to the archiepiscopal throne on the north side of the chancel, where he was joined by Monsignor Capel; and, after a short interval of silence, during which he and his attendants remained picturesquely grouped at the throne, he proceeded to vest himself. One by one the Archbishop assumed the amice, girdle, stole, cope, and mitre; and, when this was done, the choir and clergy of the Cathedral entered, the former in black cassock and surplice, the latter in rich purple vestments, but all in solemn silence. Being seated, by the courtesy of a member of the congregation, immediately in front of the high altar, I had ample opportunity of noticing all the details of the very striking ceremony which took place. On the super-altar were several very large branches of real palm, and on a table at the north side huge bundles of the same, waiting for benediction. I had previously inquired of the verger what it was customary to substitute for palm, and was told by him that real palms were used at the high altar, but box and other cheap substitutes were used for the general congregation. In this, however, he was mistaken:

none but real palms were used throughout; and, as these are procured with some difficulty, and every member of a large congregation was supplied with a good-sized branch, the expense must have been very great.

The actual Benediction service, which precedes High Mass, and is of much greater length than I had anticipated, commences with the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, which were read by the celebrant and his assistant priests, the Archbishop still occupying his throne. These were, of course, in Latin, and, on their conclusion, the Archbishop commenced the Benediction proper by reading a prayer commencing "Auge fidem," etc. Several prayers, special to the occasion, followed, in one of which supplication is made that "as the dove returning to the ark brought the olive-branch . . . so whosoever receives this creature of the olive tree may find protection of soul and body." The Archbishop then fumed the bundles of palm branches with incense, sprinkled them thrice with holy water, and proceeded to distribute them to the clergy and choir. Many of these were of gigantic size; those held by the Archbishop himself and Monsignor Capel could not have been less than nine or ten feet high; and by the time the whole large body of priests and choristers were so provided the effect was very strik-

ing indeed. Some of the palms were quite yellow, and appeared to be dried; others were fresh and green. A very small gentleman of the choir in spectacles, who, of course, came in for one of the largest, seemed almost overweighted with his treasure. When each of the occupants of the chancel had received a branch, smaller portions of the same were distributed to the whole congregation, who advanced to the foot of the altar, as if for communion, and received the branch from the officiating priests, reverently kissing it as it was given. I had my little child with me, and, of course, tiny heretic though she was, nothing would do, but she must have her palm-branch. I put the case fairly to the gentleman in a surplice who was marshalling the long files of the congregation to their places, and, I am bound to say, he acceded to her request as readily as though she had been of the number of the faithful; and the child's green palm-branch now surmounts a portrait of the Archbishop which has for many years hung in my study.

After this distribution occurred by far the strangest, and to me at first a scarcely intelligible, portion of the ceremony. A procession was formed of all the occupants of the chancel, who, chanting a lugubrious kind of anthem, passed to the west end of the church, and right out of the great doors, which were closed

upon them. Only two of the choir remained; and in this position a hymn was sung antiphonally, the singers left inside taking one verse and those outside the other in alternation. This hymn was written in ecclesiastical—or, at least, certainly not classical—elegiac couplets, commencing as follows:—

"Gloria, laus, et honor tibi sit, Rex, Christe, Redemptor;
Cui puerile decus prompsit Hosanna pium.
Israel es tu Rex Davidis, et inclyta proles,
Nomine qui in Domini, Rex benedicte, venis."

To this was responded:—

"Cœtus in excelsis te laudat cœlicus omnis,
Et mortalis homo, et cuncta creata simul."

There were a great many couplets of this kind, and the effect of the large body of voice without, responded to by the duet inside, was remarkable in the extreme. At last, the cross-bearer outside knocked with the foot of the cross at the door, which was thereupon opened, and the procession re-entered and passed again to the chancel. A Catholic Manual of Devotion for Holy Week explained this proceeding, as follows:—"This ceremony represents our pilgrimage in this mortal life, in which we unite in the promises of God with the blessed in Heaven, and live in hopes that the gates thereof will be opened through the merits of the cross of Christ." After this the regular High Mass proceeded as usual; but, although there was no sermon,

the service lasted until nearly two o'clock—the Benediction of the Palms not being over until after twelve.

Among the more interesting ceremonies of the week may be mentioned the office of Tenebræ, which is celebrated on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evening; the Consecration of the Holy Oil on Thursday morning; and the Washing of the Feet. The Preaching of the Three Hours' Agony, too, on Good Friday is a ceremony of the most interesting character. Though situated in the centre of the wealthiest suburb of London, the Pro-Cathedral has a large congregation of poor among its regular attendants. They were, of course, represented to their fullest extent on Sunday morning, and, as is ever the case at Catholic churches, received equal attention, and went away happy with as big a piece of palm as the wealthiest member of the congregation.

PASSION-TIDE AT KENSINGTON.

WHETHER we like it or not, it is impossible for us to ignore the growing importance of the æsthetical element in religious matters—that element which addresses the feeling of devotion through the channels of the senses, and by means of such accessories as music, colour, and all that is technically comprised under the term *ritual*. We live in an age of adaptation; and, as Rowland Hill said he saw no reason why a certain objectionable personage should monopolise all the good tunes, so there seems no adequate cause why, within due bounds, such an important element as the æsthetical should be monopolised by any one school of religious thought. There is a noticeable tendency to realise this principle on all hands. There was a time when mere

decency of ritual was deemed "Romish," whereas slovenliness is now decidedly the exception and not the rule. The connection, again of æsthetical beauty with advanced doctrinal opinions, or excessive regard for the sacramental system, must always have struck sensible persons as an egregious *non sequitur;* and after the performance of Bach's Passion-Musik, with full band and chorus, and sermon by Dean Stanley, in Westminster Abbey, the inconsequential alliance of æsthetics with advanced doctrine will probably be patent to all. There is no doubt that in this, as in most other respects, we may gain a good deal by studying the manners and customs of those who differ from us; and a little mild eclecticism will do us no harm.

Some such notions as these, floating dimly and vaguely enough through my mind, made me determine to "do" the Roman Catholic Cathedrals of London during Holy Week and Easter-tide, especially as the Archbishop of Westminster was to preside over the ceremonies of the former period—no longer at the dingy old quasi-Cathedral, but really Chapel, of Moorfields, but in the handsome edifice known as the Pro-Cathedral, Kensington, which has recently grown up like Aladdin's Palace, and stands a noble monument of Catholic devotion and liberality.

I commenced my rounds on Maundy Thursday, the *dies mandati* of the one command of all others —and, strolling into the Pro-Cathedral at midday, for the purpose of studying the list of services was fortunate enough to light on one of the most significant ceremonies of the season, viz., the washing of the feet, in imitation of Christ before the Last Supper. To many of us this ceremony appears to savour of literalism, from the fact of our not being educated up to it; and, indeed, there is always the danger of such ceremonies degenerating into the grotesque. Twelve little boys from St. Charles's College, Bayswater, arrayed in white gowns, with trousers tucked up and feet in slippers, received ablution at the archiepiscopal hands of Dr. Manning, who previously arrayed himself in a capacious apron for the purpose. Amongst twelve young gentlemen, averaging perhaps a dozen years each, it would not be in the nature of things if somebody did not look on the matter in a way the reverse of serious; and I much regret to say that one of the washed did giggle unmistakably during the process. In the evening of this day the service of Tenebræ was performed, which is very striking. Twelve lighted tapers are arranged on a stand, six on each side of a central one also burning. These twelve tapers are one by one ex-

tinguished while the choir chant appropriate psalms, and are supposed to represent the Disciples, who "all forsook him and fled." The centre taper represents the Light of the World Himself, and finally this is extinguished, typifying the darkness of His passion.

In addition to other ceremonies connected with this day—such as the blessing of the oil, chrism, etc.,—takes place the procession of the Blessed Sacrament to what is called "the Altar of Repose"—an altar in a side chapel, where, after the denudation of the High Altar, the consecrated Host remains during the night of Maundy Thursday, for use at the Mass of the Pre-sanctified on Good Friday. The origin of this expression, so little understood by other than Roman Catholics, lies in the fact that there is no consecration of the wafer on Good Friday, and therefore the reserved, or pre-sanctified — pre-consecrated — elements of the previous day have to be used. This quasi-mass took place at Kensington, at ten o'clock on Good Friday. The *tout ensemble* of the stripped altar swathed in rich purple, the black vestments of the officiating priests, and the solemn tones of the music were imposing in the extreme. The Sacrament was carried back in procession, under a canopy borne by four laymen, from the Altar of Repose to the High

Altar; after which the hymn "Vexilla Regis prodeunt" was sung, and the "Improperia," or "Reproaches," to music by Palestrina. Rather an amusing incident occurred with reference to the word "Improperia." I saw it on the service-list, and, not being posted up in ecclesiastical Latin, was fain to confess my ignorance to the doorkeeper. With ineffable scorn he informed me it was Latin, and that was the extent of his information. Two ecclesiastical gentlemen came to my aid, and were sure they could find it in their books. They hunted their books diligently, but could not find it, and I did not find it until I got home, and, turning to Dr. Smith's dictionary, found "Improperium—ii., *n*, *reproach*, *taunt*, (Ecclesiastical)."

At midday the preaching of the Three Hours' Agony was commenced by the Archbishop, consisting of a series of short sermons on the words of Christ upon the Cross, with intervals of silent prayer and the singing of hymns. In many parts of this fertile and congenial subject Dr. Manning seemed to be the "Archdeacon Manning" of old times again, as we can remember him in his sermon on the "Sleep of the Faithful Departed." Amongst the "bits" that thus live in the memory were the pictures of the agony of nailing to the Cross, the rending of the wounds when

the earth quaked, and, notably, the horrors of the supernatural darkness. The manner of the preacher was most impressive, and his simple black cassock, with purple girdle, more imposing than the most gorgeous vestments.

There was, however, one serious drawback to the effect of this service, which, perhaps, one would not have noticed so much were it not that the charge is so constantly brought against the Church of England of excluding the poor from her services. The whole Church was "appropriated," the centre to shilling, the sides to sixpenny, seats. There was literally no place for the poor except standing-room under the gallery at the back. Of course, at High Mass on Easter Sunday, where there is great expense for band, etc., one can understand this; but it seemed out of place at a simple service like that of the Three Hours' Agony. It was utterly impossible for a poor person to be present at the whole of it.

Later in the day the Stations of the Cross were sung; and the opening ceremony of the morning was a prayer "for all sorts and conditions of men"—"even heretics," my informant added. This, we may recollect, has its counterpart in our own Good Friday Collect, where the National

Church prays for all "Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics."

There can be no doubt that if this æsthetical element in religious teaching be legitimate, that at the Pro-Cathedral, Kensington, is of a very high order. There are, indeed, even in these days of local school-boards, those who can thus be taught only by the eye and ear. To such as these the ceremonial portion of the Roman Catholic *cultus* comes directly home; and I could not fail to be struck with the numbers who availed themselves of it—coming into their church as though it really was their own, stopping often only a few minutes; but one could not help thinking how favourably those moments would contrast with the rest of their often dark and squalid lives. This is as it should be, and is a particular wherein we should do well to relax a little of our rigidity and formality. Especially does it seem a pity, where such a principle is established, to violate it in the least degree by anything like a distinction between rich and poor. At all events, let nothing be said about the poor people being afraid of the beadle at a fashionable church after the numbers I saw turned back on Good Friday by the inflexible demand of "one shilling for the centre,

sixpence at the sides." Outsiders, of course, who are attracted, like myself, by the ceremonial, ought to pay for their accommodation; and I resolved very cheerfully to invest my mite on Easter Sunday morning at St. George's Cathedral, Southwark.

HIGH MASS IN SOUTHWARK.

HAVING described the Passion-tide services at the Pro-Cathedral of the Archdiocese of Westminster, I proceed by way of pendant, to chronicle the Easter Sunday Mass at the Cathedral Church of St. George's, Southwark. There is a vast difference between the two ceremonies, even apart from, and far beyond, the inevitable difference of tone and sentiment which we should of course, expect to find characterizing respectively the great fast and the greatest feast of the Christian year. If it be true, as I ventured to surmise, that a literalism almost amounting to the materialistic attaches to some of the ceremonies of Passion-tide—the washing of the feet, for instance, and the carrying of palms—this can scarcely be predicated of the Easter Day Mass at

St. George's, Southwark. It has been the custom for some years to celebrate this event with "the sound of cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music,"—in other words, with Mozart's 'Twelfth Mass,' rendered by a full band and chorus; insomuch that it requires an effort of something like religious Darwinism to trace in this elaborate ceremonial any resemblances to that Last Supper in the long upper room, with its simple Hallel-Hymn. So it is, however. Easter Sunday at St. George's, Southwark, has long been a favourite resort of Anglicans—especially Anglican clergymen—anxious for a mild religious dissipation, and who feel it some sort of excuse for leaving their parish church that they are anxious to hear Mozart's Twelfth. Accordingly, I joined the vast throng of my co-religionists, and by half-past ten o'clock I found myself comfortably seated in the already crowded Cathedral. Seated, we will say, but not much about the comfort. I occupied the half-hour of waiting in casting about in my mind what the peculiar cast of character is that prompts vergers in churches and box-keepers at theatres always to put the earliest arrivals in the worst possible places. The Cathedral of St. George's, instead of being placed in the hands of gentlemanly laymen, as is the case at the Pro-

Cathedral, is consigned to three or four vergers in property gowns, who have as much idea of arranging a large crowd as they would have of marshalling the forces of the German Empire. First of all, the gentleman in the gown put me into a seat which had the double disadvantage of being behind the preacher and out of view of the altar. On my mildly remonstrating, he removed me to another where I could see the altar but not the preacher, except at the risk of dislocating my neck. I attempted to make a clean breast of it and explain my reasons for desiring to command both ceremony and sermon ; but the gentleman was inexorable, and did not appreciate the Fourth Estate.

This half-hour was spent by the congregation in very uncatholic conversation. It was easy to see at a glance that the large majority were not *habitués* of the church—were, in fact, like myself, of a foreign creed. The gentlemen of Herr Meyer Lutz's band occupied themselves with tuning their instruments, and, soon after eleven, a small procession entered from the sacristy, the choir singing the "Ecce Sacerdos," by Lutz, as they did so.

To criticize the beautiful, even if somewhat sensuous, strains of Mozart's best-known mass would be superfluous. The vast congregation, which became

irretrievably lost and utterly bewildered amid the mazes of the ceremony at the altar, brightened up as one by one their old favourites, "Kyrie Eleison," "Gloria in Excelsis," "Et Incarnatus," or the sparkling "Dona nobis pacem," acted as landmarks to guide their devious ways. Dr. Danell, the bishop of the diocese, was the celebrant, and his magnificent voice and perfect intonation harmonized perfectly with the efforts of the choir. Considering the importance of music as an adjunct of Roman Catholic worship, it is astonishing how few priests have any musical ability or voice—as astonishing as the absence of such talent is among the dignitaries of our own cathedrals. Here, however, is a notable exception. The sermon was preached by Dr. Morris, Bishop of Troy, whose voice was scarcely powerful enough to fill so large a building, and who, moreover, suffered from a cough which was almost as distressing to his congregation as to himself. His sermon was taken from the gospel of the day, the text consisting of the words, "You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen. He is not here." (Mark xvi. 6.) It was a plain and seasonable discourse, of a devotional character, on what he termed the "stupendous phenomenon" of the resurrection of Christ. Laying controversy aside, the preacher confined himself to

the one proposition which asserted the connection between Christ's resurrection and our own. At times he warmed into real eloquence, as, for instance, when he touched on the instantaneous effect of the resurrection of Christ in converting many of the disciples from vacillating cowards into brave men. I fear, however, the physical infirmity of the speaker made his words inaudible to most of his congregation. After the Creed, Mr. Santley sang the "Sanctum et terrible" of Persoglini, and the band performed a march by Herr Meyer Lutz during the offertory. The service, which commenced almost punctually at eleven, was not over until nearly half-past two. There was a rumour that the Empress of the French was present. I even heard some French people expressing satisfaction that her Majesty looked so well. I could not ascertain, however, from the authorities that her Majesty had been present, though she was the previous Sunday. Perhaps that was sufficient for an ardent Bonapartist.

Such, then, is the development in this nineteenth century of that simple ceremony of the first, which we have named, and still name, the Lord's Supper; only less ornate than the Eucharistic office of the Greek Church, and not more so than many Communion services celebrated in churches

of the Established religion on the same day. There is one remarkable instance in which ecclesiastical discipline has altered the character of this institution. In order to comply with the regimen of receiving the mass fasting, it has been virtually made to be no longer a "supper," but a midday meal. In fact, the Evangelical school, who have recently signified their intention of conforming to order by wearing copes at celebration, are certainly more true to old tradition in this respect also, since by adhering to what is condemned as the "irregular" custom of evening communions, they preserve, at all events, the place of this significant ceremony, whilst the simplicity of their commemorative feast seems truer to the original spirit of the Founder.

Still, far off as the development may have carried adherents of the Sacramental system, whether in our own or the Roman Catholic Church, it is impossible to question the august character of the ceremony. The exquisite words of the service—identical with our own Communion office in many places—set to the music of Mozart, and rendered by Herr Meyer Lutz's efficient band and chorus, went far to realize Tennyson's conception of "perfect music set to noble words;" whilst the many thousands of Protestants who thronged the vast building proved the power

of such influences to soften that bitterest of all hatreds, the *odium theologicum*, and to bridge over the vast chasm of difference, doctrinal and ceremonial, between ourselves and the Church of Rome.

In the evening the Very Rev. Monsignor Capel preached to a crowded congregation at the Pro-Cathedral, Kensington, on the "Victories of the Resurrection;" the Archbishop having officiated and preached at the midday mass.

TENEBRÆ.

DARKNESS! so runs the import of that expressive word which I have here used to symbolise the influences surrounding us in the religious world at Passiontide; besides forming, as it does, the title of one peculiarly significant service which I make it my mission to describe. Well, indeed, may that word be taken as characteristic of those tremendous hours which elapsed between the Betrayal on Wednesday and the Death upon the Cross of Friday. "Darkness"—gradually gathering, deepening darkness—"was over the earth:" and yet a darkness that was not Egyptian—a gloom through which fitful gleams of the glory beyond ever and anon showed themselves, to prove the cloud had yet the silver lining. We scarcely realize, perhaps, to what an

extent these old traditions, falsely deemed effete, still linger on amongst us; how thoroughly this cold, critical age of ours becomes childlike again in matters of faith at those solemn crises in the Sacred History, Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, and Ascension-tide. And yet a very slender glance below the surface, such as I now propose to take, will convince us that this is the fact—that the old faith and the antique love are not dead, even if sleeping. Though it be very doubtful whether London is at the present moment educated to bear such a representation as the Ober-Ammergau Passion-play in her midst, yet certain it is that England—cold, un-Catholic England, as she is called—had since Wednesday, indeed, since Sunday, been acting over again, in her own informal way, the majestic drama of the Passion. Nay, more; though one body of religionists has borne, perhaps, the principal part in this representation, yet no section even of ultra-Protestantism had been able to remain rigidly aloof from the leavening influence of the great idea which was at the moment animating us all. The task I proposed to myself was to trace the different developments of that idea in those various religious bodies which I had for long made my special study; and to note carefully those evidences which surround us at such a season that,

cold and lifeless though some miscall it, the national faith is not defunct, dormant though it sometimes appears.

And, sitting down as I do to sum up my experiences of the last few days of Holy Week, that one word "Tenebræ," seems to gather them to a head. A darkness that is yet not all dark! A gloom pierced with glories, as stars stud the night-sky! Looking back for one moment to Sunday, when the Palms were blessed in the Catholic churches, one seems to see in the Passover crowds crying "Hosanna!" bright scintillations of that unearthly glory. It was the one weird moment of brightness that often precedes the storm at sun-down. Then, on Monday and Tuesday, quiet days of "waiting for the end," came the Temple-teachings during the day—came the purple evenings at Bethany, to close them in with that loving converse so faithfully chronicled by the pen of John the Beloved. It is on the Wednesday when Iscariot's foul bargain was made, that the gloom perceptibly deepens—that the lightning-cloud of the Passion seemed to have gathered its electric forces, to burst in the thunder-clap of Friday. And so it was surely in keeping with these associations that out from London's Abbey rang on Tuesday evening the strange chords of Sebastian Bach's

"Passion Musik." One who heads a school of religious thought, vulgarly deemed unimaginative, did much to gainsay such an idea by gathering those vast throngs at Westminster to thrill them with that grand and absorbing theme.

By way of commencing my Passion-tide studies I attended the picturesque service of Tenebræ, properly so called, at the Pro-Cathedral, Kensington, on Wednesday evening. This office, in primitive times, was sung at a very early hour on the mornings of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, but is now recited by anticipation on the evening preceding each of these days. It is so called from the ceremony of gradually extinguishing the lights, until, at the close of the office, the church is left in complete darkness. Fifteen candles are arranged on a triangular stand in the chancel, which is completely denuded of ornament; and during the monotonous recitation of the Penitential Psalms and passages from the Lamentations, fourteen out of the fifteen lights are slowly extinguished. This, it is said, represents the defection of the disciples, when "they all forsook Him and fled." The centre taper is left burning, while the six tall candles are also put out on the High Altar during the recitation of the "Benedictus." This, in turn, expresses the failure of faith

on the part of the Jewish nation. At length only the centre taper of the fifteen is left burning, and this is not extinguished at all, but concealed under the Epistle end of the altar, and again brought out burning, to signify that, though Christ in His humanity died, yet as to His Divinity He was still alive. During the darkness, the "Miserere" is chanted, and a noise is made in the church, to represent the disturbance of nature at the crucifixion. Such is an outline of this solemn service, which, sensuous as some may deem it, material as, no doubt, in some respects it is, still enchains the attention of those who perhaps could not be reached by other methods. The congregation was not very large, but there was a good proportion of poor: and, though the office is very long, and to an outsider almost wearisome, all the attendants remained absorbed until the very end. As far as I could see, there were no strangers present except myself. It requires some previous information as to what is being done to enable one thoroughly to appreciate the ceremony; but when the climax is at length reached, and the doleful cadences of the "Miserere" echo out through the gloom, it must be a very unimpressionable nature indeed which could fail to be moved by the situation.

The sacristan's office at a Catholic church during Holy Week must be anything but a sinecure. During the night which succeeds the Tenebræ Service, the Altar of Repose, as it is termed, has to be vested and decorated for the reception of the Host, which remains upon it from Maundy Thursday to Good Friday, as no consecration takes place on the latter day; the mass then celebrated being thence termed the Mass of the Pre-Sanctified. These side-altars, both at the Pro-Cathedral and the Church of the Carmelite Friars at Kensington, were beautifully decorated, and the brilliancy of their lights formed a striking contrast to the rest of the church, which was still veiled in sombre hangings. On Maundy Thursday, at eight o'clock in the morning, Archbishop Manning went through the process of consecrating the oil at the Pro-Cathedral, after which mass was celebrated, and the office of the Pedilavium, or Washing of the Feet, took place, the Archbishop performing that ceremony upon twelve boys from St. Charles's College, Bayswater. I feel it due to those young gentlemen to say that they went through their somewhat trying portion of the affair this time with great gravity and decorum. In fact, the whole service was most impressive. The Archbishop preached on "The Dereliction of Our Lord

upon the Cross," instead of the "Three Hours' Agony;" and also on Easter Sunday his subject was "The Kingdom of the Resurrection"—a subject which those who remember "Archdeacon" Manning of years ago will know to be singularly adapted for treatment by him.

The Ritualistic Churches, as might be expected, have incorporated into their services several of the distinctive features of Catholic ceremonial. The "Reproaches" and "Three Hours' Agony"—offices undreamed of in the simple philosophy of the Protestant—are on the list of Holy Week services for all the most "advanced" of the London churches. Strangely enough, too, the Pedilavium, or Washing of the Feet, has been retained until within a very few years by the Moravians. It had been celebrated in private, but is now discontinued; but this simple and little-known religious body still enters warmly into the ceremonies of Holy Week. On Maundy Thursday they gather in the evening, and read a harmonised account of the transactions of that eventful day, singing their favourite hymns at frequent intervals, as though to represent the Hymn which on that "solemn eventide" was sung in the "large upper room" before the Great Sufferer went, with His disciples, to the olive-garden for the last

time. The Lord's Supper is then celebrated at an hour deemed unsuitable by those who hold that such celebration and participation must be preceded by the ecclesiastical regimen of fasting; but with many hallowed associations surely to recommend it, seeing it is at the traditional hour when the command was given—"This do in remembrance of Me"—a command which has since sent this Maundy Thursday down through the ages titled with the name of the Dies Mandati.

Being anxious to ascertain whether Passion-tide, and especially Good Friday, was in any external form observed by the more rigid of the Protestant Dissenters, I put myself in communication with one who may well be regarded as their "representative man," and whom it would, perhaps, be scarcely fair to name more particularly. Whilst expressing intense sympathy with the event, he told me he still felt bound to abstain from any outward observance of the day "as a protest against superstition."

The ceremony of the Washing of the Feet at the Carmelite Monastery, Kensington, was slightly hurried; and, to an outside observer, appeared to be got over in rather a perfunctory manner. The congregation was small, on account, no doubt, of the inclemency of the weather, which involved an involuntary

feet-washing on the part of each member of the congregation who had the misfortune to walk to the church. In their habits of black and white, and with bare feet, the fifteen "sad and silent monks" streamed noiselessly into the chancel, and with them came the prior, in full vestments, with two assistants, bearing a gilt ewer, basin, and towel. He just touched the foot of each of the brethren; not giving them anything like the ablution with which the Archbishop had favoured the young gentlemen in the morning. The service was a very short one, and was immediately succeeded by Tenebræ. The contrast between the High Altar, lighted only by six tall dim tapers, and the Altar of Repose, glowing through the gloaming with its many lights, and now surrounded by a crowd of devotees in prayer, again seemed to convey perfectly the idea of contrasted gloom and glory.

Strange that, among the observances of Maundy Thursday, none seem to touch directly upon Gethsemane! Surely a lesson might be learned from what the Greek Church so aptly terms, in a Litany suffrage, the "unknown sufferings," and the ministering angel whose visit is chronicled by only one Evangelist—the lesson, namely, never out of place, that, wherever the Agony is sent, there is sent, too,

the Angel of Strength—another aspect, again, of the gloom and the glory!

And now the Passion has reached its climax. That popular preacher, Monsignor Capel, preached the "Three Hours' Agony," from twelve to three o'clock, at the Chapel of Our Lady, St. John's Wood. In the Established Church the day was observed thoroughly, in all respects, as a Sunday; and though in only a few churches any external change of ornamentation or vestment noted the season, yet in every one, without exception, the pulpit utterances bore reference to the great subject of necessity uppermost in all men's thoughts.

But one more ceremony claims notice for the evening of Maundy Thursday. In a very praiseworthy spirit of imitation of the pattern set at Westminster Abbey, the London Church Choir Association held a special service at St. Botolph's, Aldersgate, consisting of Evening Prayer, and "The Passion of Our Lord according to St. John, by G. F. Handel," and Sermon. This meeting had a special interest from the fact that it gave us the production of a work of Handel not hitherto known in this country—the "Passion Oratorio," as it is called in the preface to the score published by the German Handel Society, where it is described as "the

earliest work of Handel's youth, published at Hamburg, in 1704, when he was only nineteen years of age."

The order of proceeding on this occasion was as follows: First, the introductory symphony was played by Mr. J. J. Stephens, organist of St. Matthew's, City-road, previous to the commencement of the service. The prayers were then intoned by the Rev. W. Sparrow Simpson, Minor Canon of St. Paul's and Rector of St. Matthew's, Friday Street, as far as the Suffrages before the Psalms, when a pause was made, the officiating clergyman retiring to the Communion Table, and the first portion of the Passion music was sung by members of the Choir Association, with a chorus of about forty-five voices, and the accompaniment of a small band in addition to the organ. The form the oratorio assumes is the recitation by the tenor voice of the actual narrative of St. John, subject only to a few verbal alterations to suit the music, which have been judiciously made by Mr. Russell Martineau. At the conclusion of the first portion Mr. Simpson ascended the pulpit in place of the Rector of St. Botolph, who had been announced, and delivered a very brief address. He took no text, but informed his hearers that they were gathered to celebrate, after a manner once usual in

England, the Passion of Christ. Three centuries and a half ago it was customary to have similar celebrations in every church in London. In the old registers of his own parish, he said, there were accounts showing the sums paid from time to time to those who "sang the Passion." They were, no doubt, quaint old tunes they then used, but they did their very best. Probably in the ancient church which stood on the site of the one where they were now assembled, there had been, on Palm Sundays and Good Fridays, recitations of the Passion. There still remained, moreover, in the Gospel and Second Lesson for Palm Sunday, as they stood in our Liturgy, relics of the old custom. Luther carried this usage into the Reformed Church of Germany; and the two greatest composers of that nation, Bach and Handel, had written music for the Passion. It had been thought well, he added, to revive such celebrations. Those who were present in the Abbey last year when Bach's music was performed for the first time at a religious service in England, testified to the edification of the rite. It spoke to the heart. God had many ways of speaking to the heart —by architecture, by painting, and especially by music. Who could tell, he asked, how subtle was the influence of art to penetrate man, strangely compounded as he is? As the ice melts before a little

genial heat, so the heart which is deaf to eloquent appeals will often melt at the notes of an old hymn heard years ago from the lips of a dead mother. He concluded a very brief and therefore telling address by an eloquent admonition to his hearers to take home to themselves the thrilling incidents of the Agony and Death! That was the object of the night's gathering. The music was only a means to that end. "Behold the Man of Sorrows!" he said, "and let the sight lead to self-abasement. Say 'With Thy cross on my brow I have gone into the world and crucified Thee afresh! Here I lay myself at the foot of Thy Cross. By Thine Agony and bloody Sweat, by Thy Cross and Passion, by Thy precious Death and Burial, by Thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension, good Lord deliver me!'" Then was sung the second portion of the Passion music, after which the service concluded with the Prayer of St. Chrysostom, a hymn, and the Apostolic Benediction. Mr. J. R. Murray, the organist of St. Botolph, acted as conductor, and the whole performance went steadily and well. Besides the immediate appropriateness of such a service to the day, it can scarcely be but that such gatherings must have a most appreciable effect on the cultivation of musical art.

It is not, however, under such an aspect, or in any

way critically, that I am now viewing the matter, but as a part—and a very distinctive one—of the ceremonies that have gradually led us on to the anniversary we celebrate to-day. Upon Good Friday ensues what in the Church of England ritual is termed Easter Eve, or, in the language of Catholic ceremonial, Holy Saturday, when of the Man of Sorrows it could be written, in Keble's beautiful words:

> "At length the worst is o'er, and thou art laid
> Deep in thy darksome bed;
> All still and cold beneath yon dreary stone
> Thy sacred form is gone;
> Around those lips, where power and mercy hung,
> The dews of death have clung."

On that day the chastened ritual of the Church of England simply bids us wait—wait for the light to shine in upon the darkness. The ceremonies of the Romish Church for Holy Saturday are numerous and complicated. Chief among them is the kindling the "new fire" from flint and steel, and lighting up the lamps in church. Our attitude seems more in keeping with the watchers by that Garden-grave. Already when we use those words, "It is finished!" which rang out so marvellously in Handel's massive chords through the quaint old City church, the

first faint upslanting ray of light seemed to emerge above the dark hills, and for one more year of our lives the light of the Festival of Spring began to disperse the gloom of Passion-tide and Holy Week.

TAKING THE VEIL.

A CEREMONY to which recent debates had lent more than its intrinsic interest occurred at the Church of St. John of Jerusalem, in the public reception of a postulant into the order of "Our Lady of Mercy."

There is to the ordinary secular mind something abhorrent in the idea of a young girl thus girding herself about "with narrowing nunnery walls;" and it may well be doubted whether the mind of England be not too largely imbued with Protestantism ever to outgrow its objection in so far as the contemplative orders are concerned. In reference to these, no doubt many of us would be inclined to quote to any young lady of our acquaintance who displayed proclivities for the novitiate:—

"Examine well your blood,
Whether . . . . .
You can endure the livery of a nun,
For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,
To live a barren sister all your life,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold, fruitless moon.
Thrice blessed they that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
But earthlier happy is the rose distilled
Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness."

But the case is widely different with those "Sisters of Mercy" who have of late years grown more than ever into general favour, and even infused their spirit into our popular Protestantism. It is not for us to inquire what causes have concurred to drive the young devotee from the world to "religion." Enough for us that she devotes her "single-blessedness," not to the selfish pursuit of "contemplation," or the futile endeavour to anticipate heaven upon earth, but to the tending of that great family of sick and sorrow-laden and sinful who are so tenderly termed His "little ones" by our common Master, Christ. Such are the objects proposed to themselves by the Reverend Mother Prioress and Sisters of Mercy of the Convent of St. John of Jerusalem. Attached to this institution is the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem and St. Elizabeth of Hungary, 47, Great Ormond Street, W.C.,

established in 1856 by the late Cardinal Wiseman, and handed over to the Sisters by Archbishop Manning on the feast of St. Elizabeth, 1868. In the Pastoral which transferred the hospital to its present managers the Archbishop thus speaks of its objects:—

"The hospital is intended chiefly for three classes: First, for incurable cases for which the other hospitals provide no permanent help. It is no doubt a wise charity which requires that those whom it cannot cure shall give place to those who may be restored to health and strength. But because they cannot be cured they must not, therefore, be abandoned; and this hospital opens itself for their relief. A second class for whom the hospital is intended are patients suffering from chronic or long protracted illness. The rapid succession demanded by the great multitude of sufferers around us makes it necessary that such lingering cases should give place to the more urgent and critical. But for the very reason that they are so long afflicted they have a demand on our compassion. Lastly, the hospital has a ward for children, who, while they are under medical treatment, are at the same time carefully taught and educated. This last work of mercy, by itself, would give to the hospital an irresistible claim on our charity."

It was into the ranks of "Sisters" working for these excellent objects that I went to see a postulant admitted; and a brief sketch of the ceremony, together with an epitome of the sermon preached by Monsignor Capel on the occasion, can scarcely prove other than interesting to those at least who have common charity —shall we not say common sense?—enough to confess

that good may be done, and is done, in Christ's name, and for the love of mankind, even inside convent walls.

The celebrant on this occasion was Bishop Morris, who took his position in a chair on the top step of the altar, the Sisters, about twelve in number, entering in procession, preceded by a cross-bearer—first the novices, then the professed, and, lastly, the Superioress holding the postulant's hand. The hymn, "O gloriosa Virginum," was first sung; and, after a taper had been lighted and presented to the postulant, the sermon commenced. Monsignor Capel stood on the top step of the altar, the postulant remaining seated in the centre of the choir, whilst the Sisters were grouped around her.

The preacher, who took no text, commenced by observing that the great mark of Christ's redemption was its *generosity*. An isolated act would have accomplished it; but for three and thirty years were those acts continued. The passion was life-long. Any single detail of it would have sufficed to ransom ten thousand worlds. Now, this generosity is to be reflected in the redeemed. Whilst all are to give up vice, and obey God's laws, some are called to exceptional and higher perfection. This is how they reflect Christ's generosity. It was thus He spoke to the

young man: "If thou wilt be perfect, sell all and follow Me." It is necessary that a return be made to God for man's revolt. So the first thing man has to do is to submit his freewill to God. The stars and seas in their motions obey only a physical law; but man has freewill to dedicate to God; and this is the sacrifice in respect of which perfect souls imitate Christ's generosity. But, more than this, Christ stripped Himself of all which the world admires. His house was a mean one. He sanctified labour. He made poverty not the crime we often seem to think it, but sanctified it into a virtue. Such was His life; He calls not all to this, but to certain souls He says as He said in Palestine—says to them in the solemnity of silence—"If thou wilt be perfect, sell all thou hast, and follow Me." This resignation is the second manifestation of generosity. Thirdly, there comes a gift one scarce can venture to dwell upon—the gift of purity. None ever dared question Christ's purity. They called Him a blasphemer, and said He had an evil spirit, but they never called *that* in question. This is the gift that makes men like angels. So was His mother a virgin both before and after his birth. John, too, was the beloved disciple, because he was ever pure. So must we, if we wish to be perfect. St. Paul says, "He that giveth his daughter in marriage

doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better." "Now you are here to-day," he continued, "to stand as witnesses to one who feels this attraction from the world. Such a step as she takes can only be taken publicly, in presence of the Bishop or his delegate. She is brought hither by sisters who have forgotten home and parents, and given up their time and fortune to devote themselves to God's work. This child comes to join them. She gives up all she possesses, or may possess. She consecrates to God her virgin purity, so that, at the last, she may be of the hundred and forty and four thousand who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Now, it would be idle for her to pretend to do all this at once; so the wisdom of the Church has enjoined a two years' novitiate. During this time she will have full liberty to return to her home, should she change her mind."

"And as to you, dear child," he proceeded, "who come to give us this great example. Remember it is God's grace alone that can carry you through religious life. There will be trials here as there would have been for you in the world. So there will be deep need of perseverance. Do not fancy that you can do all at once. All will sometimes look cold. God will seem to hide his face. But, dear child, remember that

every soul which draws near to God passes by the desert to Paradise. Determine to go on, cost what it may. To-day you die to the world; henceforth your life is hid with Christ in God. One closing thought: to-day, dear child, you leave home and parents, but not to lose them; rather to *supernaturalise* all those natural relations. May God perpetuate your decision." Nothing could exceed the tenderness and earnestness of this address, which produced a deep effect on the small congregation gathered in the Sisters' Chapel. At its conclusion the postulant assumed the habit, having been up to this time arrayed in secular attire. The white veil was then placed upon her head by the Lady Superior, after having been blessed by the Bishop. The "Veni Creator" was sung; and, after the postulant, now a novice, had saluted all the sisters, the ceremony—which had been simple and impressive in the extreme—concluded with the Benediction service.

The Hospital of the Sisterhood adjoins the chapel, and at present has forty beds, thirteen sisters being in attendance, including the one just admitted to her novitiate. And thus, though it be with what she would deem an heretical blessing, do we leave our young friend. Her step is not yet irrevocable. It may be she will advance from her novitiate to final

"profession," and, assuming the black veil, bid good-bye for ever to the world outside her convent walls. It may be, on the other hand, she shall yet hear a voice Divine calling her back to that world, and to wifely, motherly work there.

RECEPTION OF A SISTER OF MERCY.

On the festival of St. Elizabeth occurred the always interesting ceremony of the admission of a postulant to her novitiate, at the Church of St. John of Jerusalem, Great Ormond Street, which adjoins the convent and hospital of the sisters. Additional *éclat* was lent to the proceedings by the announcement that the Archbishop of Westminster would be the celebrant, and long before half-past three o'clock, the hour appointed for the ceremony, the little chapel was overfilled, although half-a-crown was charged for admission. It was evident that a large section of the congregation was composed of Protestants, and several clergymen of the Church of England ensconced themselves snugly at the back of the chapel, evidently taking great interest in the proceedings. The Arch-

bishop, having taken his place in front of the altar, arrayed in mitre, and attended by two chaplains, the procession entered, consisting of cross-bearers, professed, and novices, and lastly the Lady Superior and postulant, who was arrayed in a secular dress. The hymn, "O gloriosa Virginum," having been sung, and a suitable prayer offered, the celebrant blessed a wax candle, lighted it, and presented it to the postulant. The form of benediction was curious enough, comprising the following words:—"Benedic candelam istam; infunde ei, Domine, benedictionem cœlestem, ut quibuscumque locis accensa seu posita fuerit, discedant principes tenebrarum," etc. Hereupon followed the sermon, the Archbishop standing on the top step of the altar during its delivery. He selected for his text 1 John iii. 2, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," etc. "We never know," said the preacher, "the grace God gives us until we enter into possession of it. This is a law of grace, lying over against an analogous law of nature. In nature we have first the seed, then the blade, then the full corn in the ear; and the tree is renewed year by year, whilst its falling leaves fertilize the soil in which it grows. These perish as they multiply; but not so is it with the work of God in the soul. If not hindered, this is eternal. It continually advances to perfection,

and when or how that perfection is attained we know not. We are made like His Son. The power is given in baptism, and between baptism and final perfection there is perpetual progress. Childhood is full of joy, full of visions of coming life; it lives greatly in the future. So ought we in spiritual life. 'Our conversation is in heaven.' We 'set our affections on things above.' We are 'dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God.' This is heavenly-mindedness. We know not what we shall be; we only know we shall be like Him. As in childhood, we know not what we shall be in maturity, and only get to realize it little by little, so now we have but a feeble conception of what we shall be on our death-beds, when this world passes away like a vision, and the realities of the unseen world open upon us. Then we shall be ready to say, 'I seem now only for the first time to see.' So, too, with the final vision of God. We have no conception of it now—until changed into His image—of the state where there is no death, no sin, no sorrow, no pain, no tears. This great law applies especially to her who takes to-day the habit of religion. There was a time," he said, addressing the postulant, "when you little thought you would voluntarily separate yourself from your kindred to devote yourself to Christ. Perhaps you can remember

when first the thought entered your mind. You hardly dared desire such a lot. But the attraction grew. He attracted you who said, 'If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto Me.' It was the attraction of the five wounds of His sacred heart that drew you on to this resolution. Perhaps it was combatted by friends, it may be even by your own will. You were half unready to take up the cross. The world looked brighter then when you were leaving it. You hesitated with your foot on the threshold. God worked in you. You knew not what you should be. He added His grace, and the balance turned. May God receive you, and give you peace? You have chosen, like Mary, the better part. Those who choose Christ are rich, and no bankruptcy of this world can reach them. All else passes away—home and all that makes it happy—but you are united to His sacred heart for ever. A few words as to the work going on here—the care of the sick in this hospital. There is nothing greater or more like Christ's work, except the care of souls. Christ was physician as well as priest. He has handed down the two-fold office to his pastors, and with them associated women like those devout ones of old who followed Him from Galilee, and ministered to Him of their substance. They share His ministry of compassion. There are for

them special promises of a grace like His own. He makes their heart tender, their touch gentle, like His. There are in this house forty-five beds, twenty-eight occupied, but seventeen standing empty for want of money. Since I entered this house," concluded the Archbishop, "a pious and charitable person has given funds for the permanent foundation of one bed. Go and do likewise, if you can. In any case, aid by your prayers and alms. These sisters are as literally dependent on Providence as the fowls of the air. And now, child, come make the consecration of yourself, and receive the holy habit; and may He who has begun this good work in you perfect the same to the day of Jesus Christ."

After the sermon the postulant retired to put off her secular dress, the celebrant blessing the religious habit, whilst the choir chanted the psalm, 'In exitu Israel.' At its conclusion the novice reappeared in the dress of her order, and received from the celebrant the cincture, veil, and "church cloak." 'Veni Creator Spiritus' was sung, and this young girl had left the world behind her. It is no breach of confidence to state that the present novice was a Miss Power, belonging to a wealthy family in Waterford, and then twenty-two years of age. She was to bear in religion the name of Sister Mary Evangelist.

After the beautiful Benediction service of the Church had been sung, we inspected the hospital. Chronic and incurable cases are admitted, and a large majority of the inmates are children, several of them suffering from spinal complaints. They were all clean and comfortable, and as happy as they possibly could be in their little beds, the good sisters flitting noiselessly about. Whilst we were passing from one ward to another the Archbishop bounced—though the term is scarcely archiepiscopal—up the stairs. He had appeared feeble and ascetic to the last degree in church, but here his Grace took the stairs two at a time, and, after exchanging a few cheery words, hoping we had seen the hospital, ceremony, etc., bounded into the children's ward, which he stated to be his great attraction. Certainly, if a lady determines to go out of the world, or rich folks are troubled with superfluous means, there are worse channels to which the thoughts of one or the other may turn than the Hospital of the Good Sisters of St. John of Jerusalem, for which the Archbishop pleaded so eloquently.

CRIBS.

THE realistic tendencies of the present day, which keep our stage supplied with such dramas as 'The Streets of London,' 'After Dark,' and 'Formosa,' are not by any means confined to secular histrionic representations. There exists on a higher range what has been happily termed a "pictorial religion," which, despairing of bringing home even the most striking Gospel truths subjectively to the mind of its adherents, finds it necessary to represent them objectively in the way of pictures, images, candles, and, at one particular season of the year, cribs. As far as I am aware, this peculiar form of object-lesson is characteristic of the Roman branch of the Catholic Church, and has not yet been adopted into the Anglican section. I say this very guardedly, not only because it is

always so dangerous to assert a negative, which one could not prove, but also because from general precedent it seems so very unlikely that there is any ceremony of the Roman Church which our imitative friends, the Ritualists, have not copied. However, so it is; all my experience of this mode of religious teaching has been gathered at head-quarters, that is, I have visited only Catholic cribs. Strange to say, my difficulties in gaining this experience have been great. Though it is a favourite objection of Catholics against Protestants that they keep their churches shut, and though most of the pronounced Ritualistic churches are open at Christmas for "private devotion," the Catholic churches were, as a rule, rigidly closed, except at service time. I called on the Innocents' Day at five or six such churches at the west and east ends of London, and in no one case could I enter the building. The sole exception on that day was afforded, not by a church at all, but by the Nazareth Convent at Hammersmith, though even there I found my visit an ill-timed one, this particular festival being marked by a sort of conventual saturnalia, the youngest novice assuming the rank of lady superior, and that functionary—as a nun herself said —being "nowhere" for the time. However, the politeness of the good sisters would not allow me to

make a fruitless visit, and I could not but confess that the convent cribs showed a great deal of taste, and their arrangement seemed a peculiarly fitting employment for the poor little children and aged persons whom those excellent ladies support at that wonderful establishment. I cannot do better than advise visitors to look in on this good work, where a few toys for the children's Christmas-tree, or some old wearing apparel, or, indeed, the smallest donation of any kind, will be thankfully received and usefully employed. Let us not forget, that the household of 300 in that Nazareth Convent is supported by the daily labours of some fifty gentle ladies.

The first church at which I succeeded in gaining admittance by going at service time, was St. Mary of the Angels, Bayswater, where Archbishop Manning formerly presided. The crib at this church, constructed in a vault at the west end, was a sort of miniature Madame Tussaud's, with wax figures decidedly the worse for wear, some of them lacking a finger or two. The peculiarities of this crib are that the babe is *emmaillotté*, or swaddled, after the fashion of French infants, and also the introduction of an old lady—presumably the grandmamma St. Anne—with a large basket of provisions. Some rakish-looking

shepherds, who had decidedly seen service, were tending sixpenny sheep in a corner cupboard, and the Magi, in the shape of gorgeously apparelled dolls, were wending their way across a desert of scouring sand opposite. The most practical portion of this thoroughly real (if not lifelike) picture was a small counterpane neatly spread for the offerings of the faithful, who reverently play "chuck-penny" after peeping, apparently preferring this mode of contribution to depositing their halfpence in the box provided for the purpose, and forming a somewhat incongruous object in the foreground.

At the pro-Cathedral, Kensington, the idea uppermost in the mind of him who designed the crib had evidently been to represent in the liveliest colours the poverty that surrounded the great transaction he was depicting. A wisp of straw, a cheap doll with uncomfortably scanty shirt, two Christmas-trees, and a Child's night-light constituted the whole tableau, contrasting strangely with the rich adornments cropping up here and there in this magnificent church, as strangely, indeed, as this church itself, which has sprung up, like Aladdin's palace, contrasts with the poverty of many of the Established churches in this richest suburban parish. By adroitly timing my visit at the hour of mass on the Festival of the Circumcision, I

managed to find the doors of the Carmelite Church in Silver Street open. Could it be that the monks were afraid Archdeacon Sinclair, who lives just opposite, will come and "take possession" in the absence of his own parish church? The crib here, which, I was informed, was the work of one monk, was very elaborate indeed. There was a theatrical back scene, a practical bridge in middle distance, and a waterfall beneath, with numbers of people, besides the Magi and Shepherds, wending their way towards the group of dolls in front that represented the Holy Family.

I was very curious to see what direction the genius of the Fathers of the Oratory would take in the way of cribs; so I attended high mass, and heard an excellent New-Year's sermon from Father Dalgairns, on a Sunday morning. The crib was on the south side of the Sacrarium, and looked very theatrical indeed. Not only was the Virgin arrayed in a kind of Corsair jacket of blue with yellow braid, but one of the latest stage effects, viz., the ray of brilliant light, was thrown on the principal figure of the group from one side.

There was a very large number of worshippers at this shrine, which was decidedly a little in advance of the others I have seen. There was, however, a kindred vein running through all these different examples, and —shall we be very uncharitable if we say it?—that

not of the highest sentiment. The outward representation of such a scene as this must be very refined indeed to be other than painful. The crib at Bethlehem, like the bedizened *bambino*, seems from a Protestant point of view not only decidedly babes' meat, but that not of the healthiest kind.

There is another meaning which the title of this article would certainly suggest to the mind of a schoolboy, great or small. He applies it to those translations of the classics which form — as he thinks—a royal road to learning, doing for him what he ought to do, and professes to do, for himself. The Christmas cribs attempt a like hopeless task, the same as that which forms the goal of all worship which outruns moderation in ceremony, viz., the making objective, and suggesting from outside to the worshipper what can only be subjective, and the promptings of a spirit of devotion from within. If this theory be a true one, we may congratulate ourselves that, with all their recent additions, few, if any, even of our most advanced churches, have as yet numbered amongst their apparatus of devotion, Christmas cribs.

THE PASSIONIST FATHERS AT HIGHGATE.

A MOST interesting ceremony took place at St. Joseph's Retreat, Highgate, in the shape of a celebration of the Festival of St. Paul of the Cross, founder of the order. He died at the age of 81, in the year 1775, and was canonized by the present Pope. This being the first occasion on which his festival had fallen on a Sunday, High Mass was celebrated by three members of the Dominican Monastery, Haverstock Hill, his Grace Archbishop Manning assisting pontifically. The chapel of the Passionist Fathers is a modest edifice, but was beautifully decorated for the occasion. The Chapel of St. Paul on the north side of the chapel was a perfect blaze of light, and exhibited in a monstrance the relics of the saint. The Lady Chapel on the opposite side was also

exquisitely adorned with flowers in a manner which exhibited the most perfect harmony of colours. Precisely at eleven o'clock a procession, consisting of the choir, members of the Passionist order, and celebrating priest, with deacon and subdeacon, entered from the western door, and were soon followed by the Archbishop and his attendant priests. The mass performed was Haydn's third, various pieces of music suitable to the occasion being inserted at intervals. Amongst these was a most taking composition termed "The Hymn of St. Paul of the Cross," which was sung at the offertory. In course of the mass the Archbishop ascended the altar steps, and preached from Philippians ii. 21, "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's."

These words, said the Archbishop, were spoken only thirty years after the Lord Jesus ascended, while the sweetness of his visible presence had hardly passed away, whilst the light of Pentecost was bright amidst the disciples, and the blood of Stephen warm and fresh on the earth. We should have thought that the love of Jesus Christ and the lessons of self-sacrifice learned on Calvary would have issued in energetic constancy of their hearts to Him; but the Apostle, looking round sorrowfully and with a breaking heart on the men of his day, uttered the words of

the text. What happened then had happened in different generations since. In the early Church there had been numberless declinings and revivals. That which revived the love of Jesus Christ had been contemplation of the Passion and the five sacred wounds. In the middle ages, when the love of the world had waxed cold, St. Francis of Assisi was raised up, and bore impressed upon his body the mysterious signs of the Passion. In later days—in the last century—God raised up Paul of the Cross, and imprinted on him from early childhood, not, as on St. Francis, the stigmata, but the love of the Passion, which issued in the life of an Evangelist and preacher of the Cross. After this brief panegyric on the saint, the Archbishop proceeded to examine the text in detail; and, in a highly practical manner, pointed out how there were only two centres on which the soul of man could rest, viz., self and God. After sketching the selfish life in its most salient points, he proceeded to say that, as the Apostle tells us in the text, and as we see in the lives of SS. Francis and Paul of the Cross, the one truth which teaches us to deny ourselves is the Passion. To contemplate the Passion, to have the crucifix always before us, to look through the five sacred wounds into the sacred heart, has power to melt and to subdue

us. There is, so to say, an assimilating power in the Passion. The Archbishop then enumerated at length some of the effects of such contemplation, viz. a return of love for love, holy jealousy for the honour of Christ, personal sorrow for sin, generosity in its largest sense, and love of the Cross. The sermon concluded with a twofold exhortation—to pray and work with intention to save souls, and to look for no reward in this world. The discourse, on the whole, was practical, rather than merely encomiastic. There were, ever and anon, flashes of the old picturesque style, as, for instance, when the preacher pictured as among the works of generosity the rescuing one little child from the London streets, or made continual reference to the Man of Sorrows; his own wan, emaciated face lending additional significance to his words. There was a large congregation, and the service was admirably performed, without any hitch. In the afternoon Monsignor Capel preached after vespers.

THE GREEK CHURCH IN LONDON WALL.

It might seem at first sight a misnomer to include in a volume bearing the title of "Unorthodox London" a paper on that religious body which assumes to itself, *par excellence*, the title of "Orthodox." In addition, however, to the fact that *all* the religious communities of which mention has been made, advance, either implicitly or explicitly, a precisely similar claim, boasting that their adherents alone represent the Ancient, or embody the latest development of the Modern Church, it must also be remembered that, by our preliminary definition of Orthodoxy, that term was to be applied exclusively to the Establishment, not as implying censure on other systems, but using the term simply in its ordinary and colloquial acceptation. I have been amused to

notice how many of my correspondents who have kindly revised what I have written, have felt bound for conscience' sake, and from an easily appreciable *esprit de corps*, to protest against the term "Unorthodox" being applied to the bodies they represent. The fact of the scattered members being now collected into a volume, will render such process unnecessary, because the limitation under which the term is used will stand in the forefront of the series.

Above all other religious bodies, the Orthodox Greek Church, or Holy Eastern Church, would of course repudiate the obnoxious epithet; and I am fain therefore to repeat in my last chapter what I enunciated at the opening, namely, that the term "Unorthodox" is used only from the stand-point of the Church of England, "as by law established," and therefore, it is to be hoped, with such reservation, quite inoffensively.

I had indeed fondly imagined that, when I had proceeded from South Place Chapel, Finsbury, to Roman Catholic London, I should have gone from the pole to the torrid region of religious London, but, as the traveller scaling what he believes to be the "very last" peak still sees another before him, so, even after embodying Roman Catholic London, I find the Greek Church claiming attention. Curiously enough

too, like Oliver Goldsmith's "hare whom hounds and horns pursue," I find I have run in a circle, and come in at the death almost where I originally set out, for Mr. Conway, the representative of the North Pole of pure Theism, is located on one side of Finsbury Circus, and the Greek Church, which may be taken as the equatorial region of Ecclesiasticism, lies on the other. So small an interval of material space sunders religionists who, in every other respect, are so far from each other.

I confess, with an honesty which is, I believe, somewhat unusual, that I had been fain to forego writing on the Greek Church. I paid several visits to the strangers' gallery of the handsome edifice in London Wall, but when I came away I found my notes so meagre, and my knowledge of what had been taking place so slight and confused, that I had well-nigh given up the attempt as hopeless. I went of course to the British Museum, and diligently read the Rev. John Mason Neale's work on the Greek Church. I carefully copied down the six parts of the Mass of the Catechumens, the five of the Mass of the Faithful, and the twenty portions of the Anaphora or Offering, and then attended the Eucharistic Service at London Wall once more; but I was still in the dark. I found the Roman Mass to be simplicity itself com-

pared with the Greek Eucharist, but finally, as a last resource, I called on the Rev. Narcissus Morphinos at the Church-house, and with a little help from him, succeeded in grasping at all events the outline of the service, though I must in justice add that what follows is still the result of my own individual impressions, and that this courteous priest is in no way responsible for any statements I may make, or the almost inevitable errors into which I may fall.

Let me warn those, then, who purpose being present at the curiously ornate service of the Greek Church in London Wall, that they must first journey to Mr. Masters's in New Bond Street, and provide themselves with "The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom." With this volume in my hand I found my final visit much more edifying; for though the service, as it stands in that manual is considerably abridged in practice, there are certain landmarks by which a stranger can steer his course; and, except in the matter of pronunciation, the Greek is the same as that of our school-days.

The arrangement of a Greek Church differs in many respects from that of a Roman or Anglican place of worship. The sanctuary is separated from the body of the building by a large screen, with doors and a curtain, so that, at the most solemn portion of the

Eucharistic service, the priest is completely cut off from the choir and congregation. This screen has two side doors for the entrance and exit of the deacon, and is adorned with paintings, whilst along the top and under the large cross which surmounts the whole runs the inscription: ΤΟ ΣΤΕΡΕΩΜΑ ΤΩΝ ΕΠΙ ΣΕ ΠΕΠΟΙΘΟΤΩΝ ΣΤΕΡΕΩΣΟΝ ΚΥΡΙΕ ΤΗΝ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΝ ʽΗΝ ΕΚΤΗΣΩ ΤΩ ΤΙΜΙΩ ΣΟΥ ΑΙΜΑΤΙ. Before this screen, which really runs along the top step of the altar, sanctuary lamps and tapers burn, and there is a place for the Reader, by whom the opening portion of the service is performed at the north side. There are two galleries in the church, one for strangers and another for the choir, and under the latter is the Gynæconitis, or women's portion of seats. The male worshippers occupy the centre of the nave, which is fitted with oak misereres—those uncomfortable arrangements which we find in the stalls of several cathedrals, and which necessitate an ungraceful attitude between sitting and standing. There are, generally, about a dozen people in various stages of bewilderment, in the strangers' gallery, who often leave in despair long before the service is over, but who will certainly be tempted to stay if they provide themselves with a service-book; for, when once comprehended, the Greek Eucharistic Celebration is

very beautiful, and much more akin to our own Communion service than the Roman Catholic Mass. The attendance of strangers was much larger at my last visit than ever I had seen it before. Possibly the recent appearance of a Greek prelate in our midst had somewhat stimulated public curiosity in that direction.

Public service commences at eleven with what is called the Ὄρθρος; but, as this consists mainly of a monotonous delivery of certain Psalms, etc., by the Reader, it is not very interesting, and the main body of the congregation do not come until nearly midday, when the choir also arrive. The service is over before one, so that it possesses, at all events, the merit of brevity. There is no sermon except in Lent; the whole interest being centred on the sacrifice of the Eucharist. Among the worshippers in the strngers' gallery that Sunday I found one who announced himself to me as a Roman Catholic. He must have been an erratic one; for members of that communion are, I am informed, forbidden to enter a Greek church. He was following the service devoutly from his St. Chrysostom, and bitterly deplored the schism of East and West, debating anxiously whether it might not be that "the old was better." He was evidently much impressed with the title of "Orthodox," appertaining to the Eastern Church.

At the commencement of the Eucharistic service the centre doors open, with something of effect, and show the celebrant vested in satin, and the altar draped richly, and having lighted candles, a cross, and silver-bound book upon it. This book of the Gospel the priest brings forward, when it is devoutly kissed by each member of the congregation. He is attended by a deacon, habited in a simple surplice of white, with blue cross on the back, who bears a huge lighted *bougie*. The congregation—especially the female portion—cross themselves devoutly, and genuflect at this and other parts of the service. Indeed, their zeal in this respect quite throws the Ritualists and Roman Catholics into the shade. The altar is censed, and service begins with a Litany and Antiphons, sung alternately by the priest and the choir. The singing is excellent, and without accompaniment. Some of the clauses of the Litany, too, are exceedingly beautiful, and it reappears ever and anon, like a refrain, during the service; the choir responding after each petition, κύριε ἐλεήσον. Foremost among the landmarks, which all can recognise, are the hymn known as the Trisagion, or "Holy, holy, holy;" the exquisite "Hymn of the Cherubim;" the "Sursum Corda;" and the Nicene Creed. The last is simply said by the Reader with the congregation; as is also the Lord's

Prayer in the Post-Communion. This gives a congregational element to the service, which forms its point of similarity to our own. The narrative of the institution of the Lord's Supper is also gone through, as in the English Prayer of Consecration; but, in the Greek Ritual, the actual consecration itself takes place at a later stage. The congregation do not communicate at this service, but at an earlier portion of the day, as is also the custom in the Church of Rome. The Post-Communion is exceedingly brief, and very rapidly chanted, so that the congregation has broken up, and is chatting outside, or helping to fill the long line of carriages in waiting, quite in good time for a traveller from the west to catch the first Metropolitan train at the Moorgate Street Station.

In my private conversation with the Rev. Narcissus Morphinos, I found that Roman and Anglican orders, and even Baptism, were alike ignored by the Greek Church. Apart from the "Filioque" question—that is the insertion in the Nicene Creed of the Procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father "and the Son"—the Greek Church regards the Roman as hopelessly irregular in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Trine Immersion is considered essential in the former, and the baptism of Rome and England stigmatized as "clinical" only; while the withholding

the chalice from the laity by the Roman Catholic Church is held to be a direct and positive breach of Christ's command, "Drink ye all of this." The prohibition from reading Scripture and substitution of another Head of the Church in the place of Christ are also items in the long list of defects which the Eastern has made out against the Western Church. England has copied Rome, and aggravated her defects, therefore England is as hopeless as Rome. I asked how it was the Archbishop of Tenedos had been present at Anglican Services, and was answered, with a shrug of the shoulders, that what he did he did as an individual, and must not be held as committing the Greek Church to his practices. "Scripture in its literal sense," said the good, simple-minded old man, "is the sole guide of the Greek Church;" but then, alas, every religious body, from the Jews to the Jumpers, had said that to me! He took down Bingham's 'Origines Ecclesiasticæ,' and said, "Read those volumes; there, in the Church of the First Three Centuries, you find described the Greek Church of to-day." Disclaiming all idea of proselytising or shaking my faith in my own church, he made me read aloud to him passages from the Greek Liturgy and then those from the Greek Testament on which they were based, smiling tolerantly at my barbarian pro-

nunciation of the grand old words, and at my confession that they were actually embodied in the Ritual; only I fancied I could point him to corresponding passages in the English Communion Service, and the Romish Missal too, for the matter of that. He particularly wished to draw my attention to the fact that the Greek Church did not pray *to* the Virgin Mary, but *for* her, along with the other saints; and also that, while retaining the Athanasian Creed, they did not use it in public worship, or make it a bone of contention, as he regretted to see the Church of England was doing.

So, then, literally by a circuitous route, have we come to the end of the present series of sketches. They were to be no more, and they were to embrace no expression of opinion, whether favourable or adverse. Such a study as that which has occupied me for more than two years can scarcely fail to leave a man somewhat broad in his opinions, even if the entry on such an inquiry did not presuppose him to be so at the outset. He sees that there is something good in every creed, however grotesque to him. He sees still more plainly how much better men often are than their creeds, and how largely the common sense of mankind is tacitly laying bigotry aside, and so far at least imitating the example of our typically

"Orthodox" establishment in that it allows men to think for themselves. Perhaps no happier symbol of the religious thought of our century could be found than that same much-maligned Establishment which comprehends in her wide embrace a Stanley and a Bennett, a Mackonochie and a Maguire; or, if a less egotistic image be demanded of me, I seem to see it in the silver-haired Greek priest calmly ignoring all claims to Catholicity on the part of Rome and England, and at the same time, in the most deliciously illogical way, saying—"Mind I do not want to proselytise, or to shake your conscientious belief in your own Church!"

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